#5

The Pillar and Ground of Truth.

A TREATISE

SHEWING

That the *ROMAN CHURCH* falsly claims to be That CHURCH, and the PILLAR of That TRUTH, mentioned by S. *Paul* in his First Epistle to *Timothy*, *Chap.* III. *Vers.* 15:

Which is explained in THREE PARTS.

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TO THE
READER.

AMONG all the places of Scripture, which they of the Church of Rome *are wont to alledge for a proof of their pretended* Infallibility, *I find none whereon they more rely, than that of S.* Paul *to* Timothy 1 III. 15. That thou may'ſt know how thou oughteſt to behave thy ſelf in the houſe of God, which is the CHURCH of the living God, the PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH. *Which place, ſay the* Rhemiſts, pincheth the Hereticks wonderfully, and ſo it ever did: and therefore they oppoſe themſelves directly againſt the very letter and confeſſed ſenſe of the ſame.

I have thought it therefore worth my pains, to ſhow how unjuſt this accuſation is; by opening the plain and evident meaning, the literal and confeſſed ſenſe of thoſe words: whereby it will appear that we are far from being Hereticks; *and that they, not we, are* pinched *by this place; and that there is no ground at all in it for their Infallibility; nor for their vain flouriſhes, that the* very Name of CHURCH terrifies us, and makes us pale with fear (*as* Campian *inſolently vapoured (a),*) *and that we not only* fear, but altogether abhor the word CATHOLIQUE, ſo as to leave it clean out of our Bibles, *as the fore-named* Rhemiſts (*b*) *moſt ſenſleſly miſrepreſent us.*

(*a*) *Ratio* III.

(*b*) Preface to Epiſtle of S. *James.*

For as I have proved, in the following Book, that we, *not* they *are the true CATHOLIQUES, ſo there is*

nothing further from truth, (I have likewiſe ſhown) than that the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, with any particular reſpect, to the Church of Rome. *Which is ſo far from ſtriking any terror into us, when it appropriates to it ſelf the name of* CHURCH; *that we look upon the pretence to be as ridiculous, as the proof is, they give us of it. Which is the ſole Authority of a falſe S.* Ambroſe *his Commentaries upon this place; who thus gloſſes:* All the World being God's, yet the Church only is his Houſe: the Rector (or Ruler) whereof at this time is DAMASUS. *Where the* Rhemiſts *(c) deſire us to note,* How clear a caſe it was then, that the Pope of *Rome,* was not the Governor only of one particular See, but of Chriſt's whole Houſe, which is the Univerſal Church, *&c. And further improve this conceit, in theſe words,* The Church which is the Houſe of God, whoſe Rector (*ſaith S. Ambroſe*) in his time was *Damaſus,* and now *Gregory* the thirteenth; and in the Apoſtles time S. *Peter,* is the Pillar of Truth, the eſtabliſhment of Verity: and therefore it cannot err.

(c) *Annot. in* 1 Tim. III. 15.

And truly it is worth our noting how clear a Caſe it is, that they were ſorely pinched *(to uſe their own word again) for want of proofs; when they betook themſelves to ſuch as this. For it is hard to think that Men of their education (whom we will not deſpiſe, as they do the Hereticks, a little before (d),* as moſt ignorant of the Word of God, not knowing the very Principles of Divinity) *ſhould not know that S.* Ambroſe *was not the Author of thoſe* Commentaries: *they being acknowledged by the greateſt Men in their Church to be ſpurious Brats of ſome other Writer.* Baronius (*e*) *for inſtance ſaith,* The Expoſition of *Ambroſe,* upon all *Paul's* Epiſtles, began to be wanting in the time of *Caſſiodorus:* but being plainly loſt, it is apparent, the work of another Author, was foiſted in its room. *And their other great Cardinal,* Bellarmine, *confeſſes*

(d) *Annot. in* 1 Tim. I. 7.

(e) *Annal. Tom. V. ad an.* 397. *n.* 38.

fesses as much in several places; but in one more fully (f), where he assoils an Objection of Chemnitius (*who following the rule of the Civil Law (g),* [the witness which any Man produces for himself, he is bound to receive against himself] *quotes this Book, as* Bellarmine *oft had done, in a Case of Marriage) by this Answer, That* the Author of these Commentaries is not S. *Ambrose*, as learned Men know: and more than that, whosoever was the Author, he was none, *ex celebratis patribus*, of the famous or eminent Fathers. *And indeed there is great reason for what these, and many others of that Church, say; as I might show out of the Commentaries themselves, which contradict the very words of the true S.* Ambrose.

(f) *L. I. de Matrimonio, cap. 17.*

(g) *Testem quem quis inducit prose, tenetur recipere contra se.*

But suppose he had been the Author, or these the Work of some celebrated *Writer, it is a* clear case *(and I desire it may be noted) that these* Rhemist *Annotators were not so* knowing *as they would be esteemed, or not so* conscientious *as they ought to have been; when they gather from these words that* Damasus *was Ruler over more than his own See,* even over the Universal Church, *as S.* Peter, *they say, was in the Apostles times. For S.* Ambrose *himself saith, in his Book of the* Priestly Dignity (*h*), *(which* Priests *one would think should read) that when Christ said,* Feed my Sheep; those Sheep, and that Flock, not only blessed *Peter* then received; but both he received them with us, and with him we all have received them. *And it is an unusual thing in Ancient Writers, to say the same of other Bishops, that this Writer doth of* Damasus, *when they mean no more, but that they were Rulers of that part of the Catholique Church, which was committed to their charge.*

(h) *Tom. IV. de Sacerdotali dignitate, cap. 2.*

Thus Arsenius, *for instance, writes to* Athanasius, *as he himself hath set down his Letter, which begins thus,* We loving Peace and Unity with the Catholique Church, over which thou, by the Grace of God dost

preside

preſide *or rule*, (*i*) &c. *And more than this, ſuch great Clerks as they ſhould not have been ignorant, being alſo ſuch lofty Cenſurers of the Hereticks, that* Gregory Nazianzene (*called the* Divine, *whom they read, it is to be ſuppoſed*, to learn the principles of Divinity) *ſaith*, *S.* Cyprian *was made not only a* Paſtor, *but a Paſtor that had the* largeſt dominion: (*k*) being ſet over not the Church of *Carthage* only, or *Africa*, but all the *Weſt*, and almoſt all the *Eaſt* it ſelf, and the *North* and *South*, unto whom his fame reached. *But if theſe things eſcaped their obſervation, or they ſtudiouſly concealed them, they muſt have been* moſt ignorant of the word of God, *as they ſay the Hereticks are, if they did not know, that S.* Paul *ſaith the ſame of the Elders of* Epheſus, *that this Writer doth of* Damaſus, XX. *Act.* 28. *that the Holy Ghoſt had made them overſeers*, to feed, *that is, to rule and govern*, the Church of God, which he hath purchaſed with his own Blood. *And if they knew this, why were they not ſo honeſt as to interpret the later by the former? for there is no difference between S.* Paul's *words, and the counterfeit S.* Ambroſe's. *S.* Paul *ſaith, the Elders of* Epheſus *were appointed to* rule the Church of God (*for that's the office of a Shepherd, that feeds the Flock*) *the other ſaith*, Damaſus was the ruler of God's Church. *If the Univerſal Church be thereby meant, and not his part of it only, why ſhould it not be ſo expounded in the words of S.* Paul? *and then* Damaſus *his title to this office is crackt; for there were Rulers then ſet over the Church Univerſal by the Holy Ghoſt, before he (or his Church of* Rome, *perhaps) was in being. But if S.* Paul's *words muſt have a more limited meaning; then with what conſcience do they give their S.* Ambroſe's *words, an unlimited; and not reſtrain them; as they muſt do S.* Paul's, *to the particular See, committed to his Government?*

(*i*) *Athan. Tom.* 1. *Apolog.* 2. *p.* 786. ἧς σὺ κτὶ χάριν θεοῦ προίστασαι.

(*k*) Κρόπιστος, &c. *Orat.* XVIII. *p.* 281.

And

And it was not eaſie for them to be ignorant that S. Paul, *in theſe words to* Timothy, *ſpeaks of the Church of* Epheſus, *and not of* Rome, *and was ſo far from having any thought of* S. Peter (*whom theſe* Annotators *make the Ruler at that time of* this Houſe of God) *that it is evident,* Timothy *was the perſon who preſided in it, and was the chief* Pillar and Ground of Truth *here ſpoken of; as I doubt not I have proved in the inſuing Diſcourſe. Wherein I have alſo ſhewn, that other ſucceeding Biſhops, in other Churches, had the ſame title; nay, many perſons in the Church, that were no Biſhops: who were far from thinking themſelves, or being thought by others, infallible; as theſe* Annotators *imagine they muſt needs be, who are* the Pillar and eſtabliſhment of the Truth. *That's an inference from theſe words, for which they had no more warrant; than they had to intitle* S. Ambroſe *to thoſe Commentaries.*

The Author of which alſo did ſo little dream of the Infallibility of the Church, when he gloſſed upon theſe words; that he doth not ſo much as make the Church, the Ground or eſtabliſhment of the Truth: *But ſaith in plain terms,* Firmamentum (*as the Vulgar Latine tranſlates* ἑδραίωμα) hujus veritatis ſigna ſunt & prodigia; the eſtabliſhment of this Truth (*left in the Church*) are ſigns and wonders *which the Apoſtles, that is, wrought to bring Men to the firm belief of that truth which they preached. Which doth not rely, therefore, upon the credit of the Church; but upon the credit of the Apoſtles, and of thoſe Divine Works, whereby God bare Witneſs to them: which are recorded in the Holy Scriptures.*

From whence alone we ought to derive our knowledge of the Truth, *the Apoſtle here ſpeaks of: as is moſt clearly reſolved by* S. Cyril *of* Hieruſalem, *in theſe memorable words. (l)* Concerning the Divine and Holy Myſteries of the

(l) *Catech.* IV. *Sect. de Spiritu Sancto.*

the Faith, we ought not to deliver any thing, though never ſo ſmall, without the Divine Scriptures, *&c.* neither ſhouldſt thou believe me barely ſaying theſe things to thee; unleſs thou receiveſt the demonſtration of the things, publiſhed, out of the Divine Scriptures. For this is the ſafety, or ſecurity of our Faith, which depends not upon words that we invent, but upon the demonſtration of the Divine Scriptures.

In which we hear our Lord Chriſt *himſelf ſpeaking to us: who is more to be believed than the* Church. For the Church, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, is ſubject unto Chriſt (*they are the words of S.* Auguſtine (*m*)) and therefore the Church ought not to ſet her ſelf above Chriſt: ſo as to think that they who are condemned by him may be baptized, but they that are condemned by the Church, may not be baptized: when he always judges truly; but Eccleſiaſtical Judges, being Men, are oft-times deceived.

(*m*) *Tom.* VII. *Contra Criſconium Gram. l.* 2. *c.* 21.

From them *therefore, who are fallible, we appeal to* Him, *who is infallible; and hath delivered his ſentence in the Holy Scriptures: or from a Church* particular, *we appeal to the Church* Catholique: *nay, from the* New *Church of* Rome, *to the* Old. *For we are not, as they would make the World believe, affrighted with the Name of the* Church; *whoſe judgment we truly honour, as will appear in this Treatiſe: while they diſhonour it, by confining the Church to themſelves; and then exalting it above the Scriptures of Truth; and making its mere Name ſerve to dazzle the eyes of their own People, and to keep them in profound ignorance: teaching them (n) to oppoſe the Name of a* Catholique Man, *and* the Catholique Church, *as a ſufficient anſwer to all that we moſt reaſonably object againſt them. Thus in their own conceit, it is a kind of* Gorgon's *head, which they fanſie will immediately ſtupify us, when it is oppoſed to us: but, bleſſed be God, we are ſtill in our Wits, and underſtand very well, that this*

(*n*) *Rhem. Annot. in.* XII. Luke 11.

this is no better than his old Artifice, who invented this cheat (*as S.* Cyprian (*o*) *ſpeaks*) of deceiving unwary Souls by the very Title of the Chriſtian Name. *For juſt ſo they now abuſe the Name of* Church, *and the name of* Catholique; and by good words, and fine ſpeeches, (*as S.* Paul *writes* XVI. Rom. 18.) *deceive the hearts of the ſimple.*

(*o*) *L. de Unitat Eccleſiæ.*

Whom I have endeavoured in this ſmall Treatiſe, to undeceive, and direct in the way of that TRUTH, *of which every* Church *ought to be* the Pillar and Ground. *If any one be not, but inſtead of the certain, conſtant, univerſally received Chriſtian Truth, ſet up uncertain, nay falſe, lately invented, and particular conceits of its own; it is not to be relied on, but rejected: though it hath been formerly a Church of never ſo great Authority. Such the Church of* Rome *once was; but now ceaſes ſo to be: having by taking upon her too much, loſt that regard, which otherwiſe it might have had in the Chriſtian World. It is not the ſame Church it was in the Apoſtles times, no nor in the days of* Gregory *the Great; as hath been unanſwerably demonſtrated by Bp.* Morton *heretofore* (*p*); *and lately by the Author of the* Vindication of the Anſwer of ſome late Papers; *to which there will never be an ingenuous Reply. Great and many alterations have been made therein, to the manifeſt prejudice of the Chriſtian Faith: of which that Church ſhould have been, as well as others,* a Pillar and Eſtabliſhment; *but hath notoriouſly failed in her duty, by inventing another Faith, which undermines and endangers that Faith which was once delivered to the Saints.*

(*p*) *Catholique Appeal, L. 1. cap. 2.*

Of this I have given ſo full and ſo clear an account in theſe Papers, that I fear not to expoſe them to the examination of them that are of a contrary mind: hoping, though they do not convince them of their errors yet, they will help to eſtabliſh the People of our Church, in the preſent Truth. *Which, I doubt not, they will ſee to be the truly* Catholique,

Apoſtolique Faith; *which they ought not to part withal, but preſerve as carefully as they do their life.*

And ſo they cannot fail to do, if they add to Faith, Vertue. *In order to which, I have endeavoured to make this Treatiſe as practical as I could: that we may not fall into that grand error, of thinking it enough to* hold the Truth, *though we* hold it in unrighteouſneſs.

God of his infinite mercy, deliver us all from that damnable deluſion, and eſtabliſh our hearts unblameable in Holineſs, before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, with all his Saints. 1 *Theſſ.* III. 13.

PART

PART I.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is a pious reflection which *Clemens Alexandrinus* makes upon a saying of *Plato*, that if 'truth could never have been learnt, but either 'from God himself, or from his dependents; then 'we, who have the testimonies of the Divine 'Oracles, do justly boast, that we are taught the truth, 'by the very Son of God. Which he hath revealed unto us so plainly in all things necessary to our Salvation, and transmitted unto us so intirely in the Holy Scriptures; that it cannot but be a great trouble to all those who love him and his Religion, to see such wranglings about it in his Church, as if there were no more certainty among us, *what is truth*; than there was among the Philosophers. L. VI. Strom. p. 675.

The contention about this is so sharp and fierce, that while Men seek after *Truth*, they are in danger to lose the very aim and scope of it, which is *Charity*: the love of God and of one another. This S. *Paul* determines to be the very drift of the Gospel, when he tells *Timothy*, *the end of the commandment is charity*, 1 I. 5.

Nay, they have raised so many doubts about this matter, that poor People are many times to seek for Truth it self, even in the clearest light thereof. It being some Mens business, so to confound their thoughts,

that they know it not when they ſee it: but are ſtill in great trouble about it, even when they have it.

And where to ſeek for it, is now grown a great queſtion alſo. It is to be found, no doubt, in the Church; but about that there are ſo many diſputes, that Men are to ſeek as much as before, if they go to find it there. In ſhort, there are no words more abuſed than theſe two; *Truth*, and *Church*: and therefore I hope it will do ſome ſervice to Souls, if for their plain and ſafe direction in theſe matters, I reſcue thoſe words of S. *Paul* to *Timothy*, 1 III. 15. [*the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.*] from thoſe falſe gloſſes that are put upon them, to the great diſhonour of our bleſſed Lord, and of his Holy Truth.

And for that end, I ſhall diſtinctly treat of theſe four things:

Firſt, *What that truth is*, of which either the *Church*, or *Timothy*, or both, were the *Pillar and Ground*.

Secondly, What it is to be a *Pillar and Ground* of the Truth.

Thirdly, Who it is, to whom this Office and Honour belongs, of being the Pillar and Ground of the Truth: or what we mean, when we ſay, *the Church* is intruſted therewith.

Laſtly, How it diſcharges this Office.

I.

What is *the Truth?*

Here we muſt begin; becauſe we muſt firſt know what the *Truth* is, before we can know a Society of Men to be the *Church*: which is conſtituted and made by believing and profeſſing the Truth.

And this in effect, is a reſolution of that queſtion, which *Pilate* askt our Saviour, but would not ſtay for an anſwer, *What is Truth?*

Which

Which though it be made a great difficulty by thoſe, whoſe intereſt it is to make things intricate and perplexed; yet, in my opinion, it is very eaſie to give ſatisfaction to it; and we need not go far neither, to ſeek it. For the Apoſtle himſelf immediately explains what he means by Truth in the words following; *and without Controverſie great is the myſtery of godlineſs; God was manifeſted in the Fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of Angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the World, received up into Glory.*

Where we learn *two* things in general, concerning this matter. *Firſt*, that *the truth* here ſpoken of, is that which was formerly a *Myſtery* or Secret, which lay hidden for many Ages and Generations, in the unknown purpoſe of God, but now is revealed and manifeſted, by the Son of God, and his holy Spirit, to make Men godly.

Which is the other thing we learn from thence, that *the truth*, which the Apoſtle intends, is *the Myſtery of Godlineſs*, or as he he ſpeaks in the VI. Chapter v. 3. *the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs.* And therefore whatſoever doth not tend to better Mens lives, by making them do their duties faithfully both towards God, and towards Men (to ſome of which the duties that are owing are in this very Epiſtle called *ſhewing Piety or Godlineſs*, v. 4.) we are not to reckon it among the truths, which were depoſited with *Timothy* to be preferred and upheld in the Church. For God did not deſign by the diſcovery he made of his Mind and Will, in the Goſpel, merely to enlarge our knowledge: but to rectifie our wills and affections, by the right information of our minds, and by acquainting us with ſuch weighty truths, eſpecially ſuch wonderful revelations of his love, as cannot but irreſiſtably ſway us, if we lay them to heart, unto his Obedience.

But,

But, that we may not be left to gueſs at this truth, or *myſtery of Godlineſs*, without any certainty, he ſets down a particular of it: and reduces the whole myſtery of Godlineſs, to theſe Six heads.

I. The principal is this, that *the eternal Son of God, came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghoſt of the Virgin Mary, and was made Man; that he might ſuffer for us, and make himſelf an offering for our ſins.* All this I take to be included in theſe words, *God was manifeſted in the fleſh.* Which cannot be meant of God the Father; for it is expreſsly ſaid in other places, that it was *Jeſus Chriſt who came in the fleſh*, 1 Joh. IV. 2. and is here declared to be *God*, that is, the eternal Son of God, the *Word made fleſh*, 1 Joh. 14. Which doth not denote merely his being *made Man*, but likewiſe his *ſuffering* for us: he taking our *fleſh* on purpoſe, for this very end, that therein he might, by his Death, make an atonement for Sin. And ſo the very phraſe *fleſh and blood* ſignifies in Scripture (as it doth commonly in the *Hebrew* Writers) this *weak, frail, mortal, ſuffering* State, wherein we are at preſent: into which our bleſſed Lord put himſelf, when he manifeſted himſelf in our fleſh. So we read expreſsly, II. *Hebr.* 14. where to take part with us, in our *fleſh and blood*, is to make himſelf liable to ſufferings and death. In theſe few words therefore, are contained many principles of Chriſtian truths, *viz.* that Jeſus Chriſt was really God (not God the Father, whoſe being is here ſuppoſed, but God the Son) and that he was incarnate, and really made Man, of the Subſtance of his Mother: being perfect God, and perfect Man: and as really *ſuffered for us in the fleſh*, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, 1 IV. 1. Which were the

the Doctrines that were firſt aſſaulted by the Devil, and his Agents in the beginning of our Religion (ſuch as *Simon Magus* and the reſt of that Tribe) but proved to be undoubtedly true, by the mighty power of his Spirit.

II. Which is the ſecond part of this Myſtery, *juſtified in*, or *by the Spirit*. Which ſufficiently convinced all gain-ſayers, that he was no leſs than the Son of God, *though in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh; and that by a Sacrifice for ſin, he condemned ſin in the fleſh.* VIII. Rom. 3. For as he was conceived in his Mothers Womb, by the Holy Ghoſt, I. *Luke* 35. So at his Baptiſm he was *anointed with the Holy Ghoſt and with power* (X. Act. 38.) there being then a viſible deſcent of the Spirit of God, in a Glorious manner upon him, together with a voice from Heaven, ſaying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed*, III. Matt. 17. And as it then *lighted on him*, ſo it abode, and *remained on him*, I. Joh. 32, 33. as appeared by the power of ſuch Miracles, as neither Men nor Devils could work, but only the Spirit of God. Which was ſo evidently true, that to aſcribe them to the Devil, was *the blaſphemy againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, XII. Matt. 28. 31, 32. III. Mark 29, 30. by whoſe power not only Devils were caſt out, but even the Dead were raiſed: whereby he was manifeſted to be *the reſurrection and the life*, XI. Joh. 25. By the ſame Spirit he himſelf alſo was raiſed from the Dead, and declared again *the Son of God with power*, I. Rom. 4. And having *all power in Heaven and Earth* given him, he ſent the Holy Ghoſt upon his Apoſtles on the day of Pentecoſt, as a further Juſtification of him, XV. *Joh.* 26. V. *Act.* 32. Nay, more than this, by the laying on of their hands

poured

poured it out upon others, who believed on his Name, II. *Act.* 38. VIII. 17. Which was the *unction from the Holy One*, whereby they *knew all things*, as St. *John* calls it 1. II. 20. *i. e.* were assured of all the Christian *Truth*, revealed unto them. For all these, were illustrious witnesses unto Christ, and justified this grand truth that he was *God manifested in the flesh* (for such ends and purposes, as he pretended) against all opposers, who accused it of falsity.

And who is there that doth not see several other principles of God's holy Truth, contained in this? particularly that *the Holy Ghost* is God, the third person in the Holy Trinity, being the *Spirit of God*: which *knows the things of God* (as the Spirit of Man doth what is in him, 1 *Cor.* II. 11.) and led or guided the Apostles into all Truth, XVI. *Joh.* 13. and dwells in the whole body of the Church, as his *Temple*, 1 Cor. VI. 19. (which no created Spirit can do) and gave such a Divine testimony to our Saviour, that to speak against it, was *unpardonable blasphemy*.

That other great article of our Faith also is included in this, which S. *Paul* declares in these terms: *Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*, 2 Corinth. XIII. 4.

III. This was a thing notorious to the Angels themselves: which is the *third* particular in this Mystery; *Was seen of Angels*: both at his *birth*, III. Luke 9, 10, 13. and in several passages of his *life*, IV. Matt. 11. XVII. 5. I. Joh. 51. and at his *death*, XXII. Luke 43. and at and after his *Resurrection*, XXVIII. Matt. 2. XX. Joh. 20. and also at his *Ascension*, I. Act. 10, 11. when they testified to the Apostles that this *same Jesus who was taken up from them into Heaven, shall so*

ſo come, in like manner as they had ſeen him go into Heaven. Where when he came, they *all Worſhipped him*, I. Hebr. 6. and admired at the wonderful Wiſdom of God, which was made known to them by the Church (1 *Pet.* I. 12.) eſpecially this *Myſtery of Chriſt*, as the Scripture calls it, which is the *fourth* particular in this Catalogue of Chriſtian Truths.

IV. That this Doctrine, thus confirmed and atteſted, was *preached unto the* Gentiles: who were aſſured, that they ſhould be made fellow-heirs with the *Jews*, and partakers of God's Promiſe in Chriſt, by the Goſpel, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks (III. *Epheſ.* 6.) *Unto whom this grace was given, to preach among the Gentiles the unſearchable riches of Chriſt; and to make all Men know, what is the fellowſhip of the Myſtery, which from the beginning of the World was hid in God, who created all things by Jeſus Chriſt.*

An aſtoniſhing Grace this was; declaring the infinite love and kindneſs of God: that they who thought not of it, who had no promiſes to make them expect it, who were ſtrangers to God and the Covenant of Promiſe, were on a ſudden ſurprized with the revelation of God's good will to them in Chriſt; and by belief of it, were made *fellow Citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God.* That is, the Church was made truly *Catholique*; all the World being taken into fellowſhip with the Apoſtles, *whoſe fellowſhip was with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Joh. I. 3.

V. And another great wonder was, that notwithſtanding all the oppoſition which was made by the Potentates, by the Philoſophers, and Diſputers of the World, by the Devil alſo and his Angels (who though they alſo *ſaw* him and could not but confeſs him, yet ſet themſelves

againſt him with their whole power) and notwithſtanding all the ſtrong prejudices that were in Peoples minds againſt it, this whole Myſtery of Godlineſs was entertained and received with great joy every where. Which is the *fifth* particular, ſeen of Angels, preached unto the *Gentiles, believed on in the World. So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed,* as S. *Luke* ſpeaks *Act.* XIX. 20. The reaſon was, becauſe Chriſt the Head of the Church, being raiſed from the dead, was exalted at God's right Hand, *far above all Principality and Power, and every name that is named, either in this World, or in the other:* ſo that neither Men nor Devils, could hinder the propagation of the Goſpel, by the working of that *mighty Power, which he wrought in Chriſt when he raiſed him from the Dead, and ſet him at his own right hand in the Heavenly places.*

VI. For that is the laſt part of this Myſtery of Godlineſs, he was *received up into,* or *in Glory:* that is, in a glorious manner received up into Heaven. And being *gone into the Heavens* (as S. *Peter* writes, 1 III. *ult.*) *is on the right hand of God; angels, and authorities and powers being made ſubject to him.* So ſubject, that *from henceforth he expects, till all his enemies be made his foot-ſtool,* X. Hebr. 13. and having vanquiſhed Death, which is the laſt Enemy, and raiſed Men out of their Graves, he will judge them according to their Works. For he was received up into Glory, to be the Judge of quick and dead.

Theſe are the Principal Points of that *Truth,* which ought to be ſupported and maintained in the Chriſtian Church: being the ſubſtantial and neceſſary Articles of our Faith, without the belief of which we cannot be Chriſtians.

For

For the fuller Explication of which I ſhall make *Six* obſervations: the firſt of which the Apoſtle himſelf here ſuggeſts; and the reſt will fairly follow from thence.

1. Firſt the Apoſtle notes them to be ſuch Truths as were *without Controverſie:* about which there was no diſpute among ſerious Chriſtians.

2. And therefore theſe are the truly *Catholique* Doctrines, and theſe alone.

3. The *fundamental* Truths, upon which our Religion and the Church it ſelf is built.

4. And therefore he that holds cloſe to theſe, cannot be a *Heretick.*

5. But they that call Men ſo, becauſe they believe not other things, which they have made neceſſary, have rent the Chriſtian Church, and are guilty of that ſin, of which they falſly accuſe others.

6. Which guilt is the greater, becauſe the beſt and moſt learned Men among them, have confeſſed thoſe Doctrines, which they have ſuperadded to the *Ancient Truth,* to be doubtful, ſuperfluous, and unknown to the firſt Ages of the Church: that is, not *truly Catholique Doctrines.*

I.

The firſt of theſe ought to be well weighed: that *the Truth,* which is to be ſupported and maintained in the Church, is ſo evident and ſo abundantly atteſted, that it is confeſſed by all Chriſtians. Thus that word ὁμολογουμένως, *without controverſie*, or *confeſſedly* ſignifies, as we may learn from the uſe of it among the Ancient *Greeks*; one of which [*Diodorus Sinopenſis*] ſpeaks of their Supreme God, juſt as the Apoſtle doth of *the Myſtery of Godlineſs* (*a*).

(*a*) *Apud Athenæum, Lib.* VI. *cap.* 9.

———— Ὁ Ζεὺς ὁ φίλιος
Ὁ μὴ θεῶν μέγιστος ὁμολογούμενος.

Jupiter *the Friendly is, without controverſie*, or by common conſent agreed to be, *the greateſt of the Gods*. In like manner the Apoſtle is to be underſtood, when he ſaith the ſame of theſe great and venerable Doctrines of Godlineſs: Which are ſuch, as are confeſſed by all, by a common agreement; and doubted of by none. For they are no other, than thoſe which are contained in the Apoſtles Creed; about which there is no queſtion among Chriſtians, but they all conſent unto it, being baptized into the belief of thoſe Truths: in which the whole Church hath agreed, every where, in all times, down from the Apoſtles days, to this preſent Age.

(*b*) *L.* I. *Contra Hæreſ. c.*2. For the Church, ſaith *Irenæus* (*b*), though diſperſed throughout the World, to the ends of the Earth, received from the Apoſtles and their Diſciples the Faith, which is *in one God, the Father Almighty, who made the Heaven, and the Earth, and Sea, and all that is in them*: *and in one Chriſt Jeſus, the Son of God, who was Incarnate for our Salvation: and in the Holy Ghoſt, who preached by the Prophets the diſpenſations, and approaches of God, and the Birth of the Virgin, and the Suffering, the Reſurrection from the Dead, and the Bodily Aſcenſion of our Dear Lord Chriſt Jeſus into the Heavens; and his coming from thence in the Glory of the Father, to gather together all things, and to raiſe all humane fleſh; that, according to the good pleaſure of the Father inviſible, every knee of things in Heaven, or Earth, or under the Earth, may bow to Chriſt Jeſus, our Lord, and God, and Saviour, and King, and every Tongue may confeſs him; and he may do Righteous Judgment upon all; and ſend the Spirits of wickedneſs, and the Angels that tranſgreſſed and apoſtatized, together with*

with ungodly, unjuſt, lawleſs, and blaſphemous Men, into eternal fire; but to the juſt, and the holy, and ſuch as obſerve his Commandments, and perſevere in his Love, either always or by Repentance, graciouſly beſtow life, give immortality, and put them in poſſeſſion of eternal Glory.

This is, σωμάτιον τῆς ἀληθείας (as he calls it) *a little Body of Truth*; *the Rule of Faith*, (as *Tertullian* often ſpeaks) inſtituted by Chriſt; which *nullas habet apud nos quæſtiones* (*c*), is not doubted of, nor hath any queſtions about it among Chriſtians, but ſuch as Hereſies have brought in, and which make Men Hereticks. (*c*) *L. de præſcript. cap.* XIV.

And therefore this is *the Truth*, of which the Church ought to be the *Pillar and Ground* to the end of the World: but not preſume, as I ſhall ſhow anon, to bind all Chriſtians, upon pain of periſhing everlaſtingly, to believe what is not contained in this Rule of belief. For it alone is ſufficient, as appears by this; that into it, *all the Articles or Parts* (as a learned Man of the Roman Church ſpeaks (*d*)) *of which a Chriſtian conſiſts, are digeſted, as it were, into one Body.* (*d*) *Rigaltius Ib.*

II.

From whence it follows that theſe are the true *Catholique*, and the *only* Catholique Doctrines. *Catholique* they are, becauſe ſpread every where: and the *only* Catholique, becauſe none beſides theſe, till very lately, were received as part of the Chriſtian Truth, which muſt neceſſarily be believed, if we hope to be ſaved.

Hear how *Irenæus* (*e*) proclaims this, immediately after the foregoing words: which (*f*) *Epiphanius* thought ſo conſiderable, that he hath tranſcribed both theſe Chapters into his Book againſt Hereſies. (*e*) *L. I. cap. 3.* (*f*) *Hæreſ.* XXXI. *n.* 30, 31.

The Church, as we have ſaid, having received this Preaching (or Doctrine) *and this Faith, preſerves it moſt carefully,*

fully, as if it inhabited but one House; though it be dispersed through the whole World. And with unanimous consent, Preaches, and Teaches and Delivers these things, as having but one Mouth. For though there be different Languages in the World, yet the force of that which is delivered is one and the same. So that neither the Churches situated in Germany *believe otherwise, or have any other Tradition, nor those in* Spain, *nor those in* France, *nor those in the* East, *nor those in* Egypt, *nor those in* Libya, *nor those in the midst of the World; but as the Sun, that Creature of God, is one and the same in the whole World, so the* τὸ κήρυγμα τ ἀληθείας, *the Preaching,* or Doctrine *of the Truth shines every where, and inlightens all Men, who are willing to come to the knowledge of the Truth. And neither he, among the Governors of the Church, who is most powerful in Speech, teaches different things from these (for no Man is above his Master) nor he that is weak in Speech diminishes the Tradition. For there being one and the same Faith, neither he that is able to speak a great deal concerning it, doth inlarge or exceed: nor he that can say but a little, doth take away, or make it less.*

Which is such a plain declaration that the *Creed* contains the whole Apostolical Tradition (or Faith, for they are the same in his Language) and the only Catholique Doctrine; that if we were at this day to contrive words on purpose, for the asserting this Truth, we could not invent any more full or express than these. Which show us that this Faith is sufficient not only for the ignorant, the *Catechumens*, and beginners in Religion; but for the most improved in Christian knowledge; for those that instructed and ruled the Church, who had no Authority to preach or impose any other belief.

This

This is a thing that runs through his whole Book: for he repeats it again, in fewer words, in the latter end of the next Chapter, that the *true Church hath but that one and the ſame Faith* (before mentioned) *throughout the whole World.* Which in the 19*th* Chapter, he calls the *Rule of Truth*, by which all error was diſcovered: *for holding this rule, though they ſpeak very various and many things, we eaſily evince that they have deviated from the Truth.*

And again, in the *third* Book (*g*), he hath recourſe to the ſame Rule of Truth, *unto which whoſoever will hearken, may ſee what is the tradition of the Apoſtles, manifeſted in the whole World, in every Church.* Where he ſaith they were able to tell what Biſhops were ſettled by the Apoſtles and their Succeſſors, untill his time: who neither taught nor thought of any thing like to the dotages of the Hereticks of thoſe days. And becauſe it would have been too long to reckon up all the Churches, he inſtances in the Church of *Rome*, (to which all had occaſion to go, upon ſome buſineſs or other, becauſe it was the Imperial City) by whoſe Biſhop he ſaith, *that Tradition, and that Preaching*, or Doctrine *of Truth, which was from the Apoſtles in the Church, is come to us; and is a moſt full proof, that one and the ſame life giving faith, which was from the Apoſtles in the Church, is conferred to this time, and delivered in Truth. The very ſame, which* Polycarp *wrote to the* Philippians (mark theſe words, which they of the preſent Roman Church are wont to conceal, that they may make the World believe *Irenæus* thought the *Tradition* of the Apoſtles, that is the Chriſtian Faith, was to be ſought only in their Church) *and which was in the Church of* Epheſus, *founded by* Paul, *and having* John *continuing in it, till the time of* Trajan: *which Church is a true witneſs of the Tradition of the Apoſtles.*

(*g*) L. III. Chap. 3.

And

And that there may be no miſtake about this *Tradition*, he repeats it again in the next Chapter, and informs us (in very remarkable words) it was nothing elſe but the Doctrine contained in the *Creed*.

L. III. Cap. 4.

Since theſe things are ſo plain, we ought not to ſeek further, among others, for truth; which we may eaſily find in the Church: For the Apoſtles left moſt fully in it, as in a rich Repoſitory, all things that belong to truth: So that every one, who will, may take from thence the Water of Life, &c. (out of the Holy Scriptures, he means, as appears by what follows); *And ſuppoſe the Apoſtles had not left us the Scriptures, ſhall we not follow the Order of the Tradition,* (or Rule of Faith) *which they delivered to thoſe, unto whom they committed the Churches? To which Ordination many barbarous Nations, who believe on Chriſt, aſſent, having the Doctrine of Salvation, without Paper and Ink, written by the Spirit in their Heart, and diligently preſerving the* ANCIENT TRADITION: *believing in one God, the maker of Heaven and Earth, and of all things which are therein, by Chriſt Jeſus the Son of God; Who out of his moſt eminent love to his Creature vouchſafed to be born of the Virgin, uniting Man to God by himſelf; and ſuffering under* Pontius Pilate, *and riſing again, and being illuſtriouſly received in glory, ſhall come again, the Saviour of thoſe that are ſaved, and the Judge of thoſe that are judged: Sending into eternal fire, the miſſhapers of Truth, and the contemners of his Father, and of his coming. Thoſe that have believed this Faith without Letters, we, in our Language, call barbarous: but as to their opinion, and cuſtom, and converſation, they pleaſe God, becauſe of their Faith, by which they are moſt wiſe: living in all Righteouſneſs, Chaſtity, and Wiſdom. Unto whom, if any one ſhould ſpeak in their Language, thoſe things which Hereticks have invented; they would preſently ſtop their ears, and run away, not enduring to hear the blaſphe-*

my.

my. Thus by that OLD TRADITION *of the Apoſtles* (*viz.* the Creed) *they do not ſo much as admit into their thoughts, the portentous talk of thoſe* Hereticks in his days.

Theſe things I have thought fit to ſet down, the more largely, becauſe they are an evident demonſtration, what the OLD TRADITION of the Apoſtles is; which is nothing elſe, but that ſummary of Chriſtian Truth contained in the Creed: unto which they would ſuffer no other Tradition to be added; but contented themſelves with this, as fully ſufficient: and by this judged of all other things, that pretended to come from the Apoſtles: and were every where ſo well inſtructed in this, that in thoſe Churches which as yet had not received the Apoſtolical Writings (the Holy Scriptures of the N. T.) they had this Doctrine, as the contents of thoſe Scriptures: and were thought *moſt wiſe* (being wiſe enough to ſalvation) in this faith alone, without any other.

But becauſe this is ſuch a very important Truth, I ſhall take a little more pains, to ſet down the ſenſe of the Church in all Ages, concerning it: that the Reader may be ſatisfied, there is no other Truth, but this alone, which is abſolutely neceſſary to his Salvation. Which they ſometime comprehend in fewer words; but never add any one article, beyond thoſe in the Creed.

If we had the Letters of *Ignatius* intire and ſincere, we ſhould be able to tell what he took for Truth, immediately after the Apoſtles were dead. And thus much is evident from them as they now are, that they or he who contrived the Epiſtle to the *Philippians* under his name (for it is not thought to be his) took this to be the Doctrine of that Second Age: when after the mention of the Doctrine of the *Trinity*, and that the *Son of God* was *truly made Man*, *truly born*, and truly *crucified*, *dead*,

and roſe again (not ſeemingly, not in appearance only, but in Truth) they make him conclude ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας, Μακάριος. *He that believes theſe things, as they are, and were really done, is a bleſſed Man.* Which is an undoubted teſtimony they took this *Creed* to be ſufficient to ſalvation: which *Ignatius* in an unqueſtioned Epiſtle of his to the Church of *Smyrna*, calls the *unmoveable Faith*, wherein he bleſſed God, they were perfected, or knit together; mentioning no other Articles, but thoſe before named.

Polycarp alſo, in the ſame Age, wrote an Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, wherein they that had a mind and took care of their ſalvation, might learn, the *character of his Faith and the Doctrine of Truth*: which was the very ſame as *Irenæus* relates in the forenamed Chapter, with that ſet down by him, which he calls that *one and only Truth which he received from the Apoſtles, and delivered to the Church.*

L. III. Cap. 3, 4. & *Euſeb. Hiſt. L.* IV. *c.* 14.

And what they taught in *Aſia*, and *Irenæus* in *France*, that *Tertullian*, in the latter end of the ſame Age, taught in *Africk*; that there is but *one only immoveable, irreformable Rule of Faith* (*h*) (that is, *there is no other form of believing but this*, as *de la Cerda* honeſtly interprets the word *irreformabilis*) *in one God, Almighty, the Creator of the World, and in his Son Jeſus Chriſt, born of the Virgin* Mary, *crucified under* Pontius Pilate, *raiſed the third day from the dead, received up into Heaven, and ſitting now at the right hand of the Father, and ſhall come to judge the quick and the dead, by the reſurrection alſo of the Fleſh.*

L. de Velandis Virg. c. 1.

This he calls in that place, the *Law of Faith*: which he ſets down, in more words, in another Book; where he Prefaces to it by this remarkable propoſition as he calls it, (*i*) *that there is one, and the ſame certain Doctrine inſtituted by Chriſt*, which all people ought to believe; and conſequently

(*i*) *L. de præſcription. c.* 9.

ſequently to ſeek, that, when they have found it, they may believe. Now *the inquiſition of one certain appointment cannot be infinite:* which is an incouragement to ſeek till one find, and believe when he hath found; becauſe there remains, ſaith he, 'Nothing more but to preſerve and keep, what thou haſt believed. *For thou believeſt this alſo, that there is nothing elſe to be believed.* 'And therefore no further inquiry to be made, when 'thou haſt found and believed, that which was appointed by him, who did not command thee to enquire after any thing, but what he appointed.

Upon which principle having a little further enlarged, he proceeds to lay down the (*k*) *Rule of Faith* (*that one certain appointment*, which if one believe, there is nothing elſe to be believed) *whereby we believe there is one God alone, and no other but the Creator of the World, who made all things of nothing, by his Word, emitted before all things. That Word called his Son, ſeen variouſly in the name of* GOD *by the Patriarchs, heard in the Prophets, and at laſt brought down by the Spirit and power of God the Father into the Virgin* Mary, *made fleſh in her Womb, and born of her, became Jeſus Chriſt: and thereupon preached the new Law, and the new promiſe of the Kingdom of Heaven; wrought miracles, was crucified, roſe the third day, was taken up into Heaven, ſitteth at the right hand of the Father, ſent the vicarious power of the Holy Spirit, who works in believers: ſhall come in glory, to take holy perſons to the enjoyment of eternal Life, and the celeſtial promiſes, and to condemn the prophane to everlaſting fire: both parties being raiſed up again, with the reſtoring of the fleſh.* (*k*) *Ib.* Chap. XIII.

This is the Rule, *about which*, he there ſaith, there *are* no *queſtions:* the Rule, *in which Faith intirely conſiſts*; that Faith which will ſave a Man: unto which curioſity ought to yeild: for to *know nothing againſt the Rule is*

to know all things. And beyond this Rule, he there expreſly argues, (*l*). there is nothing to be believed: for if we ſtill be to ſeek for Faith, where ſhall we reſt? *Where ſhall we make an end of ſeeking? Where ſhall we make a ſtand and ſtay our believing? Or where ſhall a full ſtop be put to finding?*

(*l*) *Ib.* Cap. X. XIV. *Ubi enim erit finis quærendi? Ubi ſtatio credendi? &c.*

And that this was the conſtant Doctrine of thoſe times and places, it appears from hence, that as *Irenæus* often repeats this Rule and this alone, ſo doth he a *third* time inſiſt upon this, even after he became a *Montaniſt*; as the only Rule that had run down to their times *from the beginning of the Goſpel*: which he had always profeſſed, and now much more, being more fully (as he fancied) inſtructed by the *Paraclete*, the leader into all Truth. Who durſt not (it ſeems) though he pretended to Revelations, adventure to alter this Rule: which *Tertullian* recites again, (*m*) in the ſame terms, without any inlargements, as he had done in his former Books.

(*m*) *Adv. Praxeam, Cap.* 2.

And thereby ſatisfies us, that he did not caſually make this the *Rule of Faith*, but that it was his conſtant ſenſe: which though he do not expreſs in the very ſame words and ſyllables, it only ſhows they had no other ſenſe, but this in their minds. And, as *Vigilius* (*n*) ſpeaks about this very matter, *nec præjudicant verba, ubi ſenſus incolumis permanet*, the words do not make a wrong opinion, where the ſenſe remains ſafe and ſound. Which may be applied to all the *forms* of belief, which were in the Church of *Rome*, of *Aquileia*, and in the Churches of the *Eaſt*, before the great Council of *Nice*: none of which differ in ſenſe (though in ſome words they do) nor have one Article of Faith more, than the Creed now contains: which *Tertullian* (*o*) once more calls the *Rule of Truth, which comes tranſmitted from Chriſt, by his companions*, or Apoſtles: and in another place, moſt ſignificantly, *that ONE EDICT of GOD, which* hangs up (as the Edicts of the Emperor did in a Table) *to be read by all* (*p*).

(*n*) *L.* IV. *adv. Eutychianos.*

(*o*) *Apolog. Cap.* 47.

(*p*) *De Reſurrect. Carnis Cap.* 18.

Nor

Nor was there any other Faith in the next Age to this (in the *third Century*) as we may be satisfied from *Origen*, who in his Preface to his Books περὶ Ἀρχῶν, thinking it neceſſary firſt to lay down *a certain line, and manifeſt rule*, by which to inquire concerning other things, and having diſtinguiſhed between things neceſſary to be believed, and thoſe which are not neceſſary; he gives the ſumm of thoſe things, which were *manifeſtly delivered by the Apoſtolical Preaching:* and it is nothing elſe, but the preſent Creed: about which, he ſaith, there is *one ſenſe of the whole Church.*

And in his firſt Book againſt *Celſus*, who ſaid the Chriſtian Religion was κρύφιον δόγμα, *a clancular Doctrine*, which they hid and concealed, he avows that the Chriſtian Doctrine was as well known in the World, as the Opinions of Philoſophers. *For who doth not know that we believe Jeſus was born of a Virgin, was crucified, roſe again from the Dead, will come to Judgment, and puniſh Sinners and reward the Righteous according to their Deeds? Nay, the Myſtery of the future Reſurrection is divulged, though laught at by unbelievers.* Theſe were the great things which were commonly taught, and all obliged to believe; as for others, which were not common, the Philoſophers, he tells him, had their abſtruſe Doctrines as well as Chriſtians. To this purpoſe we meet with a notable paſſage in *Epiphanius* (in the ſucceeding Age) which ſhows that the ſubſtance of the Chriſtian Faith concerning our Saviour was commonly known, even by thoſe who did not profeſs it; and underſtood to be this which *Origen* mentions. For a *Jew* coming to ſee an eminent Man of his Nation who was ſick, whiſpered this in his Ear, when they deſpaired of his life, * *Believe in Jeſus who was crucified under* Pontius Pilate *the Governor, being the Son of GOD, and afterward born of* Mary, *the Chriſt of GOD, and raiſed from the dead, and that He ſhall come to judge the quick and the dead.* S. *Cy-*

* *Hæreſ.* XXX. *n.* 9.

(o) *Epiſt. ad Magnum de bapt. Novat. edit. Rig. p.* 152.

S. *Cyprian* (*o*) alſo plainly ſhows there was no other Faith in his Church: when he anſwers thoſe who ſaid, the *Novatians*, held *the ſame Law* that the Catholick Church held, and baptized into the *ſame Creed*; believing the *ſame God, the Father, the ſame Chriſt the Son, the ſame Holy Ghoſt*; that this would not avail them (for *Chore* and *Dathan* and *Abiram*, believed the ſame God with *Moſes* and *Aaron*); and beſides, they did not believe *remiſſion of ſins*, and *eternal life*, by the *holy Church*; ſince they had left the Church.

* *Sozomen. L.* III. *c.* 5.

Lucianus alſo a famous Presbyter of the Church of *Antioch*, and a Martyr for the Faith of Chriſt, left a *form of believing*, written with his own hand *, if we may believe the Biſhops aſſembled at *Antioch*, who ſent it about in the time of the *Arian* Controverſie, to prove they were none of his followers, but held ἣν πίστιν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐκτεθεῖσαν, the Faith which had been ſet forth from the beginning: and it is this, as *Socrates* reports it (*q*); *We have learnt from the beginning to believe in one God of the whole World, the maker and preſerver of all things intelligible and ſenſible; and in one Only begotten Son of God, ſubſiſting before all Worlds, and being together with the Father who begot him; by whom all things were made, whether viſible or inviſible; who in the laſt days came down, by the good pleaſure of the Father, and took fleſh of the Holy Virgin, and having fulfilled the whole Will of his Father, ſuffered and roſe again, and returned to Heaven, and ſitteth at the right Hand of the Father, and ſhall come to judge the quick and dead, and remaineth King and God for ever. And if it be needful to add it, we believe the Reſurrection of the fleſh and life everlaſting.*

(q) *L.* II. *Eccleſ. Hiſt. c.* 10.

I will not trouble the Reader with a larger Creed of theirs which there follows, more fully explaining the Doctrine of the Trinity; becauſe it belongs to the following Age, *Cent.* IV.

In

In which, it is known the *Nicene* Fathers met to ſettle the Controverſie about the *Son of God:* but did not make any new Creed, or add one Article to what had been believed before; but only explain'd one Article, the ſenſe of which the *Arians* perverted. No, they were ſo far from inlarging the Chriſtian Faith, that when they met together they recited no other Creed, but that of the Apoſtles: as *Laurentius Valla* affirms he had read in ſome ancient Books of *Iſidore*; who collected the Canons of old Councils. And accordingly when they had drawn up that Creed, which they publiſhed, they did not think they had made the leaſt change in the matter of Faith; but declared that, *this* (*r*) *was the Creed delivered by the Holy Apoſtles.* Which S. *Ambroſe* (*s*) in that Age calls *clavem* the key, S. *Hierom indicium* the mark or ſign of Faith: in which *after the confeſſion of the Trinity, and of the Unity of the Church, the whole Myſtery of the Chriſtian Religion is concluded, in the Reſurrection of the fleſh.* And which *Greg. Nazianzen*, in his ſecond Letter to *Cledonius*, calls, * σωτηρων ὅρον τινα καὶ κανόνα τῆς ἡμετέρας φρονήματος, *a ſhort boundary and rule of our ſenſe or judgment: i. e.* of the Faith of Chriſtians.

(*r*) *Epiphanius in Anchorat.*
(*s*) *Serm.* 38. *Hieron. Epiſt. ad Pammach.*
* *Orat.* L. II. beginning.

S. *Auſtin* eſpecially in a great number of places, declares, that this is the only Faith required to make a Man a Chriſtian. Particularly in his (*t*) Book he wrote on purpoſe about this matter; which he begins thus, *Since the juſt live by Faith, the greater care muſt be taken that Faith be not corrupted*; and then adds, *Now the Catholique Faith is made known to the faithful, in the Creed.* Which having explained, he concludes his Book in theſe words; *which few words are known to the faithful, that believing they may be ſubdued to God; and being brought under his Yoke may live aright; and living aright, may cleanſe their Heart; and their Heart*

(*t*) *L. de Fide & Symbolo. Tom.* III.

Heart being cleanſed, they may underſtand what they believe.

In like manner before he begins the Explication of the Book of *Geneſis* (*u*), he ſets down what the Catholique Faith is; becauſe Hereticks were wont to draw the Scriptures to their own ſenſe, againſt the Catholique Faith. And the Catholique Faith, by which he conſiders all things, is nothing elſe but that in the *Nicene* Creed: beginning with the belief *of God the Father Almighty*, and concluding with the belief of *eternal Life, and the promiſe of the heavenly Kingdom.*

(*u*) *De Geneſi ad literam L. imperfectus.*

Which is agreeable to the direction he gives to others, in his Book of *Chriſtian Doctrine* (*x*); that in all ambiguous things, *the rule of Faith* be conſulted, leſt any ſenſe, that is contrary thereunto, be admitted. Which, he elſewhere ſaith *, is *the rule of Faith common to little and great in the Church.*

(*x*) *L.III. c.2.*

* *Epiſt.* LVII.

It is needleſs to add any more out of that Father; and I ſhall but briefly mention the Creed of Pope *Damaſus* in the ſame Age (among S. *Hierom*'s Works †) which is only a confeſſion of the bleſſed Trinity, with the reſt of the Articles concerning the Conception, Birth, Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Exaltation, and coming again of our bleſſed Saviour, to raiſe us from the Dead, and to give to every Man according to his works: concluding with theſe obſervable words; *Read theſe things, believe theſe things, retain theſe things: ſubjugate thy Soul to this belief, and thou ſhalt obtain life and reward from Chriſt.*

† *Tom.* IV.

But the words of the great *Athanaſius* alone are ſufficient to this purpoſe: in the Letter which he, and the Biſhops with him, ſent to the Emperor *Jovinian* (*z*), where they tell him the Faith confeſſed by the *Nicene* Fathers, is that which was preached ἐξ ἀιῶνος, from the very beginning: unto which all the Churches every where

(*z*) *Tom.* I. *pag.* 245. & *Theodoret. l.* IV. *Eccleſ. Hiſt. c.* 2.

'where conſent, whether they be in *Spain* or *Britain*, or 'France, or all *Italy*: with thoſe in *Dalmatia*, *Dacia*, *My*-'*ſia*, *Macedonia*, and all *Greece*, all *Africk*, *Sardinia*, *Cy*-'*prus*, *Crete*, *Pamphylia*, *Lycia*, *Iſauria*, *Egypt*, *Lybia*, *Pon*-'*tus*, *Capadocia*, and their next Neighbours, with all the 'Churches of the *Eaſt* (a few excepted who were *Ari*-'*ans*) whoſe minds they knew, and whoſe Writings 'they had to produce. And then having ſet down the '*Nicene* Creed, they conclude: *In this Faith it is neceſ*-'*ſary for all to remain, as Divine and Apoſtolical: and* '*not to change it.* For which he gives this reaſon, in another account of it, to *Epictetus* (*a*) Biſhop of *Corinth*: *becauſe it is ſufficient for the overthrow of all ungodlineſs, and for the eſtabliſhment of a pious Faith in Chriſt.* (*a*) *Tom.* I. *pag.* 582.

Which is a plain declaration, that this Faith is not defective: and that in the Creed, commonly aſcribed to him, there was no intention to add any new Article of Faith, but only to explain the old. For a whole Synod (*viz.* that at *Sardis*) forbad, he tells us in another place (*b*); any other Faith to be written but this, with which all ſhould reſt contented, διὰ τὸ μηδὲν αὐτῇ λείπειν, &c. *becauſe there was nothing wanting in it, but it was full of godlineſs*: and that there ought no new Faith to be ſet forth, *leſt this ſhould ſeem to be imperfect, and occaſion ſhould be given, to them that had a mind, to be often writing and defining concerning Faith.* (*b*) *Epiſt. ad Antioch. p.* 576.

I omit that Confeſſion of Faith which S. *Baſil* makes, in his *Book of the true Faith* (*c*): and two others in *Epiphanius*; of both which he ſaith, that *the Faith of the Holy Church* (*d*), and that they were *delivered by the Apoſtles*. Which is a further confirmation, that though they added many more words to the Apoſtles Creed, yet they added no new Article of Faith: but only expounded more largely the meaning of ſome part of it, upon the occaſion of ſome Hereſies, which troubled the (*c*) *Tom.* II. *pag.* 354. (*d*) *In Anchor.*

Church in those times. When it was so far from their thoughts to add any new thing to the first Creed, that among the numerous Creeds, we find, in *Athanasius* (e), in *Eusebius*, and others, there is not one of them, that makes any such attempt.

(e) *Epist. de Synodis Arim. & Seleuc.*

Nor did the Second General Council of *Constantinople* design any more; but only κρατῦναι *to strengthen and confirm the* Nicene *Faith*, as *Socrates* * speaks. Which *Constantinopolitan* Creed, or one very like, *Cyril* of *Hierusalem* expounded in his Church: and saith it was the *only Faith delivered by the Church, and fortified by all the Scripture* (g). 'For since all are not able to read the 'Scriptures, and some by their want of understanding, 'others by their business are hindred in acquiring that 'knowledge, therefore, lest Mens Souls should be lost 'by ignorance, *we have comprehended, in a few sentences,* 'τὸ πᾶν δόγμα τῆς πίστεως, *the whole Doctrine of Faith.* Which 'he earnestly presses them to have written not in Paper, 'but in their Heart: and to carry it about with them as 'their *Viaticum* in the whole course of their life: *and be-* 'sides this to receive no other. No, saith he, if I should 'change my mind, and teach the contrary, do not be- 'lieve me; no nor an Angel from Heaven, as the Apo- 'stle speaks, if he should Preach any other Gospel, but 'that you have received. *For these Articles of Faith* 'were not, as it seems, composed by Men: but the principal 'things being gathered together out of the SCRIPTURE, 'they fill up one Doctrine of Faith.

* L. V. cap. 8.

(g) Cateches. V. p. 44.

But it is more than time to proceed to the *Fifth* Age, in which we find them so stedfast in this perswasion (that the ancient Creed contained all things necessary to be believed) that the Fathers assembled in the Third General Council (h) at *Ephesus*, expresly decreed, that *it should not be lawful for any Man to produce, or write, or compose* ἑτέραν πίστιν, *any other Faith, besides that defined by the* Nicene *Fathers.* And

(h) Can. VII.

And that, *if any durſt be ſo bold as either to compoſe, or offer any other Faith, to thoſe that would be converted, from Heatheniſm, or Judaiſm, or whatſoever Hereſie; if they were Biſhops, or Clergy-men, they ſhould be depoſed; if Laymen, they ſhould be anathematized.* By which we may learn what would have become of the Pope himſelf, if he had attempted then, what his Succeſſors in theſe latter times, have done.

For ſo ſacredly did they keep to this, that S. *Cyril* of *Alexandria (i)* tells *Joh. Antiochenus*, they could not indure that the Faith defined at *Nice*, or the Symbol of Faith there made, ſhould by any means be ſhaken: *nor do we ſuffer our ſelves or others to change one word of what is there, or to go beſides it, ſo much as in one ſyllable*; remembring him that ſaid, *remove not the ancient Landmarks*, which thy Fathers have ſet thee: *for it was not they that ſpake, but the Spirit it ſelf of God, and the Father.* Which he confirms by the fore-mentioned Letter of *Athanaſius* to *Epictetus*: which ſome, he ſaith, had ſet forth adulterated and depraved, and therefore he tranſmits it to him ſincere and uncorrupted, out of ancient Copies. And he had the greater reaſon to ſay, they could not alter one word of it; becauſe the Council of *Epheſus* it ſelf, though it decreed againſt *Neſtorius*, that the bleſſed Virgin was Θεοτόκος, *the Mother of God*, yet they would not add that word to the ancient Creed: but thought it ſufficient to determine the point againſt him. This *Cyril* further declares in an Epiſtle to *Acacius (k)*; where he confutes thoſe who accuſed him of receiving a new Creed, in theſe words: *None ever required of us a new Expoſition of Faith, nor do we admit of any from others*; ἀπόχρη γὰρ ἡμῖν ἡ θεόπνευς γραφὴ, &c. *for the divinely-inſpired Scripture ſufficeth us, and the vigilance of the Ancient Fathers, and the Symbol of Faith; which is exactly conformed to all right opinions.*

(i) *Tom.* V. *pars* 2. *p.*108.

(k) *Ib. p.*112.

And it is well known that the next General Council at *Chalcedon* renewed this Canon of the Council of *Epheſus:* Decreeing in the very ſame words, with very little alteration, that *no Man ſhould produce or write any other Faith, nor think or teach otherways:* under the penalties before-mentioned; only, with this difference, that to *Lay-men* are added *Monks,* againſt whom the Synod decreed an Anathema, if they preſumed to teach any other Faith.

In the *Sixth* Age, the ſame was again repeated in the *Fifth* General Council at *Conſtantinople,* under the Emperor *Juſtinian:* they ſolemnly profeſſing, in their *Third* Seſſion, that they embraced all the Four foregoing General Councils; which is renewed in their Eighth Seſſion, and all their Decrees confirm'd, with a particular defence of the laſt Council at *Chalcedon*; concluding with the ſame ſolemn Decree, that none ſhould dare to teach or write any thing contrary to thoſe conſtitutions, but if he were a Biſhop or Clergy-man he ſhould be depoſed; if a Monk or Laick, anathematized.

Juſtinian himſelf alſo in his Epiſtle to the Biſhops at *Conſtantinople* (*l*) takes ſpecial notice, how the Fathers in the Council at *Chalcedon* anathematized thoſe who had delivered, or do deliver *any other Creed, but that which was expounded by the* 318 *Holy Fathers, and explained by the* 150 *Fathers*; that is the *Apoſtles Creed,* expounded by the two firſt General Councils at *Nice* and *Conſtantinople. For we* * *would have you know* (ſaith he) *that thoſe things which were expounded and defined by the four holy Councils of* Nice, Conſtantinople, Epheſus *the firſt, and* Chalcedon, *concerning* ONE AND THE SAME FAITH, *we keep and defend and follow them, and all that are conſonant to them. And whatſoever is not conſonant to this, or may be found by any perſon written againſt thoſe things, which were defined concerning* ONE AND THE

(*l*) *In Collatione* 1. *quintæ Syn.*

* *Tom.* V. *Labb. Edit.* P. 422.

THE SAME FAITH in those four Councils, or in one of them, that we execrate, as altogether abhorrent from Christian piety. And this Emperor was no mean Divine (though *Baronius* is pleased to slander him as *illiterate*, and presumptuous for medling in matters of Faith) for Pope *Agatho* himself, and the whole *sixth* General Council, who approved of *Agatho*'s Letter (*m*) put him in the rank of the most excellent Fathers and Ecclesiastick Writers. For to prove out of the Fathers, two Natures in Christ, he tells *Constantine Pogonatus*, that S. *Cyril*, S. *Chrysostome* and a great many other Bishops, whom he names, taught this, *& præomnibus*, &c. *and above all these, that zealous defender of the true and Apostolick Faith*, Justinian *the Emperor of pious memory, whose integrity of Faith did as much exalt the Christian Commonwealth, as by the sincerity thereof, it was pleasing to God*, &c. which is enough to make the defenders of the present Roman Church, blush at the insincerity of their great *Annalist* who makes this Emperor to have been a perfect block, not past his A. B. C. (*n*) whom one of their own Popes (who lived in the next age to him, and is *Sainted* by them) makes equal (to say no more) unto S. *Chrysostome*, and the greatest Bishops that had been in the Church.

(*m*) *Conc.* VI. *Act.* 4.

(*n*) *Ad An.* 528. *n.* 2. 551. *n.* 2. and many other places.

I might add the praises which Pope *Gregory* the great gives of him in many places: but I shall rather observe how he in the later end of this *Age*, concurrs with him, and with the forenamed Councils, in this opinion; that no other Faith but this was to be admitted. For giving an account of his Faith (*o*) as the manner was, upon his advancement to the Papacy, and speaking of the four first General Councils, in so high a Style, that he professed to receive and reverence them, *as the four Books of the Holy Gospel*; he gives this reason for it: '*because* '*on these, as one a square stone, the structure of the Holy* '*Faith*

(*o*) *L.* 1. *Epist.* 24.

'*Faith ariſeth, and the rule of every ones life and action* '*conſiſts.* So that whoſever doth not hold this ſolid 'ground, although he appear a *Stone*, yet he lies out 'of the building: After which words, he alſo profeſſes his veneration of the *fifth* Council, and approves of all that they ordained.

This cuſtom (in the Roman Church particularly) of giving an account of their Faith, to their Brethren when they were newly advanced to the Prieſthood, is mentioned by Pope *Gelaſius* (*p*); and ſeems to have been begun, upon occaſion of the great factions which were raiſed againſt the Council of *Chalcedon*. Whereupon *Childerick* King of *France*, as ſoon as *Pelagius* was advanced to the See of *Rome*, upon the death of *Vigilius* (whoſe ſentence had been condemned as heretical in the 5*th* Council) deſired to know if he held the definition of the Council of *Chalcedon* (which contained the *Nicene*, *Conſtantinopolian*, and *Epheſine* Faith:) unto which he anſwered in a Letter, which is in the body of the *Canon Law* (*q*), that he received the definitions of the 4. General Councils concerning the Catholique Faith; and then having rehearſed the Creed, *I believe in one Lord, Father, and Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, viz. *the Father Almighty*, &c. he thus concludes. *This therefore is my Faith, and the hope which is in me by the gift of the mercy of God: of which S.* Peter *commands us to be ready to anſwer to every one who asks a reaſon, or an account of us.*

(*p*) *Epiſt. 2. ad Laurentium Epiſc.*

(*q*) *Decret. pars 2. Cauſa* XXV. *q. 1. c.* X.

From which it appears ſufficiently, that they had no other account to give of their Faith, in thoſe days, than that which we now give in our Church: who believe all that they did then, and believe, as they did, that nothing more is neceſſary to be believed.

But it will be uſefull if I give a brief account alſo of the ſence of the following Ages in this matter. And in

in the VII. Age Pope *Agatho*, before mentioned, ſent a Synodical Epiſtle (from himſelf and 125 Biſhops aſſembled at *Rome*) to the *6th* General Council, held alſo at *Conſtantinople*, in which there is a confeſſion of their Faith (which they ſay they were taught *by the Apoſtolical and Evangelical Tradition:*) which conſiſts of no more Articles than are in the foregoing Creeds. It is inſerted into the Acts of that General Council (*r*), wherein thoſe Creeds were again recited and confirmed, in the ſame words and under the ſame penalties, as in the Councils of *Epheſus* and *Chalcedon:* with a ſevere prohibition of ſo much as a Καινοφωνία *a new manner of ſpeech, or invention of a word*, to the ſubverſion of what was then determined. (*r*) *Seſſ.* IV. *Sixtæ Syn.*

Which was done more largely, in the Council immediately following, called Πενθέκτη (being a kind of ſupplement to the former ſitting in the ſame place) where it was decreed, in the very firſt Canon, that *the Faith delivered by the Miniſters of the Word*, τῆς παραδοθείσης ἀποδόλων, *the divinely choſen Apoſtles, who were eye witneſſes to him, ſhould be preſerved* ἀκαινοτόμητον *without any innovation, immutably and inviolably.* And then they ratify diſtinctly the Decrees of the *Nicene* Council, and the other *five* following General Councils, which they name in order, with the occaſion of them: and conclude with theſe words. *We neither intend to add any thing at all to what was formerly defined, nor to take away any thing: nor can we, by any means do it.*

In theſe two Councils Pope *Honorius* was condemned as an Heretick: which I mention only for this reaſon; that the ground of his condemnation was, becauſe he had conſented to the defiling of the *undefiled Rule of Apoſtolical Tradition*, viz. the Creed. They are the words of Pope *Leo* the ſecond; who receiving the Acts of the ſixth Synod, which were tranſmitted to him, anathe-

anathematized *Honorius*, becauſe he *had not adorned that Apoſtolical Church, with the Doctrine of Apoſtolical Tradition.*

In the next Age (which was the VIII*th* after Chriſt) the ſecond Council at *Nice*, which ſet up the worſhip of Images, paſt the ſame condemnation upon him: and making mention of the *ſix* (*ſ*) foregoing Councils, *they confirm and eſtabliſh all that had been delivered from the beginning:* only they fraudulently add, to bring in their Image worſhip, *whether written or unwritten.* Which made the firſt alteration in the Doctrine of the Church: all the foregoing Councils, having derived their Faith, wholly from the Scriptures. As the following Council at *Frankfort* did, where as the worſhipping of Images was condemned; ſo the Holy Scriptures were highly extolled, in words which ſignified they thought them their only ſafe Directors. The *thirtieth* Chapter of the ſecond Book of the *Capitulare* of *Charles* the Great, abounds with ſuch expreſſions as theſe, *the Scripture is a Treaſure that wants no good, but is redundant in all that Good is.* And in the beginning of the Third Book, he and the Fathers there aſſembled, give an account of their Faith, in a Creed, which they intitule, *A Confeſſion of the Catholique Faith, which we have received from the Holy Fathers, which we hold and believe with a pure heart.* It is that in S. *Hierom*'s Works, inſcribed, *Symboli explanatio ad Damaſum* I. which they thus ſubſcribe, *This is the true integrity of the Catholique tradition of Faith, which we believe and confeſs with a ſincere heart*, &c. *This is the true Faith, this confeſſion we preſerve and hold: which whoſoever keeps whole and undefiled, he ſhall have everlaſting Salvation.*

(*ſ*) *Act.* VII.

Thus far therefore, they were not got beyond the firſt *Creed*, of which this is the explanation. Nor was *John Damaſcen* himſelf advanced any further; but confined

fined his belief to what is contained in the Law and the Prophets, Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, οὐδὲν πρωτέρω τούτων ἐπιζητοῦντες (*t*), *ſeeking for nothing beyond theſe.* 'For ſince 'God is good, and envies no body, he concludes that he 'hath revealed there all that is profitable for us, and con-'cealed only thoſe things we are not able to bear. And 'therefore *let us love*, ſaith he, *theſe things, let us abide 'in them: not removing the Eternal Boundaries, nor going 'beyond the Divine Tradition.*

(*t*) *L.* 1. *Orthod. F. d. cap.* 1.

Which they ſeem to have preſerved, without exceeding the ancient limits, in the beginning of the *Ninth* Age. For in a Council at *Mentz* (*u*), care is taken for teaching the People the *Creed*, (which they call *ſignaculum fidei*, the ſeal of Faith) and the *Lords Prayer*; for which end they are required to ſend their Children to School, or to the Monaſteries, or their Pariſh Prieſts, that they might *rightly learn the Catholique Faith and the Lords Prayer.*

(*u*) *An.* 813. *Can.* XLV.

Hitherto therefore the *Catholique* Faith was contained in the common Creed, which had been from the beginning. But towards the latter end of that Age, the Council of (*x*) *Conſtantinople* (which the Roman Church calls the the VIIIth General Council) began to talk of the *Regulæ Patrum*, the Rules of the Fathers (in ſtead of the ancient word *Regula fidei*, the Rule of Faith, which is the Apoſtles Creed) and called them the *Secondary Oracles.* And therefore profeſſed not only to *hold all that the Catholique Church received from the Apoſtles, and the General Councils: but from any Father or great Doctor in the Church.* Which was the ready way to change the Faith of the Church; and to turn particular Mens Opinions, into matter of common belief: though no new Article was as yet put into the ancient Creed.

(*x*) *An.* 859. *Act.* 10. *Can.* I.

The two next Ages are acknowledged to be ſo barbarous, by the Writers of the Roman Church, that they are aſhamed of them: and in ſome Collections they have made of the *Councils*, there is not ſo much as one mentioned in the *Tenth* Age.

And in the following, there were ſo many frivolous things debated, and ſuch Corruptions crept into the Chriſtian Doctrine, that they run on very faſt, to the introducing a new Creed into the Church.

Yet this is remarkable, that in the time of *Thomas Aquinas*, who flouriſhed in the XIIIth Century, the Scripture ſtill continued the only Rule of Faith; and the Apoſtles Creed, a ſufficient ſummary of the Faith therein contained. For in the reſolution of this doubt, Why ſhould Articles of Faith be put in the Creed, ſince the Scripture *is the Rule of Faith, to which it is not lawfull to add, or from it to ſubſtract*; his Anwer is(*y*), that the *Truth of Faith is* diffuſely, and after divers manners, and ſometimes obſcurely contained in Scripture: ſo that long ſtudy and exerciſe is required to find out the truth of Faith there, which they that have abundance of buſineſs, have not leiſure to uſe. *And therefore it was neceſſary that out of the ſentences of Holy Scripture, ſomething manifeſt and clear ſhould be ſummarily gathered, which ſhould be propounded unto all to be believed: Which truly is not added to the Holy Scripture, but rather taken out of the Holy Scripture.*

(*y*) *Secunda 2dæ. Q. 1. Art. IX. ad primum.*

And reſolving next of all, that doubt, *There is one Faith* (as the Apoſtle ſaith IV. *Epheſ.*) *but many Creeds*, his anſwer is (*z*), that *in all the Creeds the ſame truth of Faith is taught. But it was neceſſary the people ſhould there be inſtructed more diligently in the truth of Faith, where errors ſprung up, leſt the Faith of the ſimple ſhould be corrupted by Hereticks. And this was the Cauſe why it was needful to ſet forth more Creeds: which differ in*

(*z*) *Ib. ad Secundum.*

no

no other thing but this; that those things are explained more fully in one, which are contained implicitly in another.

To the same purpose, many other of that sort of Writers declare their sense, in the following Ages.

And this also is worthy of great remark, that no longer ago, than at the Council of *Florence* begun 1438 (which the *Greeks* call the VIIIth General Council) the Authority of the above-named *Ephesine* Canon, about holding to the *Nicene Creed*, was pressed with great earnestness by the *Greeks*, upon the *Latins* there assembled. For they said it was by no means lawful to add μήτε συλλαβὴν, μήτε λέξιν, μήτε ῥῆμα (†), *not so much as a syllable, nor a phrase, nor a word*: and laid such a weight upon it, as to affirm, *No man will accuse that Faith of imperfection, unless he be mad.* * And they likewise backt it with a passage in a Letter of Pope *Celestine* to *Nestorius* †, where he saith, *who is not to be judged worthy of an Anathema, that either adds, or takes away?* καὶ γὰρ ἡ πίστις ἡ παραδοθεῖσα παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων, οὔτε προσθήκην, οὔτε μείωσιν ἀπαιτεῖ. *For that Faith which was delivered by the Apostles, requires neither addition, nor diminution.*

† *Tom.* XIII. *Lab. Sess.* X. *p.* 162.

* *Ib.* p. 163.

† *Ib.* p. 167.

Unto which the *Roman* Bishops had nothing to reply, but that the Canon did not forbid *another exposition* σύμφωνον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, *consonant to the Truth in that Creed*: but only διαφορὰν καὶ ἐναντιότητα *any thing that was different, or contrary to it.* Both these they acknowledge to be prohibited, in those words [*No man shall bring in another Faith than that at* Nice] δηλονότι ἐναντίαν, ἢ μαχομένην, ἢ διαφέρουσαν, ἢ ἀλλοτρίαν, ἢ ξένην ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθοῦς πίστεως, *that is, contrary, or opposite, or different, or diverse, or strange from the true Faith.* Where it is remarkable, a *different, another Faith*, is acknowledged to be forbidden, as well as a *contrary*. Nay, they acknowledge that none but a General Council could make so much

Ib. p. 167.

as ἑτέραν ἔκθεσιν *another explication* of the Articles of that Creed, though not different from it.

In the Creed of the Apostles that is, there are some things contained *implicitely* (as *Thomas Aquinas* you heard speaks) and being *virtually* there, either in the Letter or the sence, may be drawn from thence by evident consequence (such as the *Deity of Christ, his two Natures,* the *Catholique Church,* which was included in those words *I believe the holy Church,* as this Article is expresst in the old *Roman* Creed, and the like) and yet such an explication, these Fathers confessed, could by no Man, no assembly of Men, less than an *Oecumenical* Council, be lawfully made and imposed upon the Church. For which they quote *Aquinas* (whom † they call ὁ ἅγιος Θωμᾶς) that there never was ἀνάπτυξις ἐν τῷ συμβόλῳ an *explication of the Creed, but in an Oecumenical Council, and he speaks of any Creed whatsoever, which was common in the Church.*

† *Ib.* p. 163.

And therefore in conclusion they absolutely deny that the *Latine* Church had added any thing to the Creed. 'For the *Nicene,* and the *Constantinopolitan* Creed are 'both one: So that the one being read, the other is un-'derstood: For though they differ in words, they agree 'in sense and in truth. And the like they affirm of all 'other Creeds: and thereby answer the objection that 'they had added a word to the Creed, about the pro-'cession of the Holy Ghost, from the Father, *and* the 'Son: which is true, they confessed, with respect to 'the words, but not with respect to the sense. For still 'the Creed remains ἓν καὶ ταυτὸν, εἰ καὶ διαφέρει τοῖς ῥήμασι * *one* 'and the same; *though it differ in the words.* And there-'fore it follows it *was not properly an addition, but one and* 'the same thing, ἢ ἑ ταυτόπιστος ἔκθεσις, *or the exposition of* 'the very self same thing.

* *Ib.* p. 170.

All

All which I have ſet down thus largely, to ſhow that thus far therefore, all things continued as they had done from the beginning: that is, notwithſtanding the new Opinions there were in the Church; there was no new Creed made, no new Article added to the Creed; nothing, but what had been ſo at the firſt, made neceſſary to Salvation.

Which is the laſt thing I obſerve, that till the concluſion of the Council of *Trent*, that is, till a little more than an hundred years ago; there were no other Creeds, but thoſe which we confeſs and believe in this Church: which are the *Apoſtles Creed* expounded, not inlarged by any new Articles. But then indeed, Pope *Pius* IV. in purſuance of the Councils Order, framed another Confeſſion of Faith, conſiſting of no leſs than XII. new Articles, added to the old: never heard of in any Creed, throughout the whole Church, till this time. And it muſt be called and eſteemed a *New Faith*: and it makes that to be a *New Church*; which falſly calls it ſelf the Ancient *Catholique* Apoſtolique Church of Chriſt. For it is none of theſe, neither *Ancient*, nor *Catholique*, nor *Apoſtolique*: but *New*, *Roman*, *Tridentine* Church; derived I mean from the *Roman* Biſhops at *Trent*.

It will be fit I think to ſet down this *New* Creed; that the Reader may compare it, with thoſe I have ſhown were hitherto the intire Faith of the Catholique Church. It may be found in ſeveral of our Writers; but I wiſh it were in every bodies hand, and therefore take the pains to tranſcribe it, for the benefit of thoſe into whoſe hands this Book ſhall come.

Pope

Pope *PIUS* his Creed.

I N. *Believe and profeſs with a firm Faith, all and every thing, contained in the Symbol of Faith, which the holy* Roman *Church uſes,* viz. *I believe in one God the Father Almighty, maker of Heaven and Earth,* &c. to the end of that we call the *Nicene Creed.* After which immediately follow the *New Articles,* in theſe words:

The Apoſtolical and Eccleſiaſtical Traditions, and the reſt of the Obſervations and Conſtitutions of the ſame Church, I moſt firmly admit and embrace.

I alſo admit (or receive) *the Holy Scripture according to that ſenſe, which the holy Mother Church (to whom it belongs to judge of the true ſenſe) hath held and doth hold: nor will I ever underſtand and interpret it, otherwiſe than according to the unanimous conſent of the Fathers.*

I profeſs alſo that there are truly and properly, Seven Sacraments of the New Law, inſtituted by Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord; and neceſſary to the Salvation of mankind, though not all of them neceſſary to every Man, viz. *Baptiſm, Confirmation, the Euchariſt, Pennance, Extreme Unction, Orders, and Matrimony: and that they confer grace; and that, of theſe, Baptiſm, Confirmation, and Orders cannot be repeated without Sacriledge.*

I likewiſe receive and admit, all the received and approved Rites of the Catholique Church, in the ſolemn Adminiſtration of all the above-ſaid Sacraments.

All and every thing, which was defined and declared about Original ſin, and Juſtification, by the moſt holy Council of Trent, *I embrace and receive.*

I profeſs likewiſe, that in the Maſs is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory Sacrifice for the quick and dead: and that in the moſt Holy Sacrament of the Euchariſt

riſt there is truly, really, and ſubſtantially the Body and Blood, together with the Soul, and Divinity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt: and that there is a converſion made of the whole ſubſtance of Bread into his Body, and of the whole ſubſtance of Wine, into his Blood; which converſion the Catholique Church calls TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

I confeſs alſo, that under either kind (or ſpecies) *only, whole and intire Chriſt, and the true Sacrament is received.*

I conſtanly hold there is a Purgatory; and that the Souls there detained, are helpt by the ſuffrages of the faithful.

As alſo that the Saints who Reign together with Chriſt, are to be worſhipped and invocated; and that they offer Prayers to God for us: and that their Reliques are to be venerated.

I moſt firmly aſſert, that the Images of Chriſt, and the Mother of God, the always-Virgin, as alſo of other Saints are to be had and retained: and due honour and veneration to be beſtowed on them.

I affirm alſo, that the power of Indulgences was left by Chriſt in his Church, and that their uſe is moſt wholeſom to Chriſtian People.

I acknowledge the holy Catholique, and Apoſtolique Roman *Church to be the Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches: and I promiſe and ſwear true Obedience, to the Biſhop of* Rome, *Succeſſor of S.* Peter *the Prince of Apoſtles, and Vicar of Jeſus Chriſt.*

All the reſt alſo, delivered, defined and declared by the ſacred Canons, and Oecumenical Councils, eſpecially by the moſt holy Synod of Trent, *I receive and profeſs without doubt: and likewiſe all things contrary, and whatſoever Hereſies condemned, rejected and anathematized by the Church, I in like manner condemn, reject and Anathematize.*

This true Catholique Faith, without which no Man can be ſaved, which at preſent I freely profeſs, and truly hold, I will moſt conſtantly retain and confeſs intire and inviolable (by God's help) to my laſt breath: and take care, as much

as lies in me, that it be held, taught, and preached by my Subjects, or thoſe, whoſe care belongs to me in my Office.

I the aforeſaid N. *Promiſe, Vow and Swear: So help me God, and theſe holy Goſpels.*

This *Bull* (as they call it) bears date on the Ides of *November*, 1564. and concludes in the uſual manner, with threats *of the indignation of God, and of his bleſſed Apoſtles S.* Peter *and* Paul, againſt all that ſhall infringe or oppoſe it.

And every Reader, I ſuppoſe, diſcerns that this is not meerly a confeſſion of Faith, but likewiſe a ſolemn Oath. And ſo the Title of it bears, *A Bull concerning a form of an Oath of profeſſion of Faith.* Which *Oath* all Eccleſiaſtical Perſons, whether *Secular*, or *Regular*, as they diſtinguiſh them, and all *Military* Orders are bound to take.

And it is as eaſie to obſerve, that this is perfectly *New*, both as an *Oath*, and as a *profeſſion of Faith.* Never was there any ſuch *Creed* impoſed before, or ſo much as framed: much leſs tyed upon Men by an *Oath.* For when theſe Fathers met at *Trent*, and were to make a profeſſion of Faith, by rehearſing the Creed *which the Roman Church uſes* (*a*), (ſo the words are) they could find none to profeſs, but the *Nicene Creed*; no larger Creed was in uſe; no not there, in the *Roman Church:* but theſe very Men who afterward turned *New Creed-makers*, were forced to be content with that.

(*a*) *Seſſ.* III.

And therefore this *new Profeſſion*, is moſt impudently pretended to be the *true Catholique Faith:* being in no ſenſe Catholique, neither as to place, nor time. For it was no where uſed, till they made it, no not there; nor is now every where believed; and was not at all believed, in any Church, for above 1500 Years; nor now uſed in that Church it ſelf, when they admit Members into

into the Catholique Church, by Baptiſm: but they are put into a ſtate of Salvation, by believing, as before, the old *Nicene* Creed alone.

Which is a direct contradiction to their new Creed, which they make *neceſſary to Salvation*: but can never ſhow to be contained *implicitely* in the old. For it is as impoſſible to draw Water out of a Pumice, as to extract out of the Apoſtles Creed, the Doctrine of *Tranſubſtantiation*, *Worſhipping of Images*, *Seven Sacraments*, the *Traditions and other Conſtitutions* uſed in the *Roman* Church. Which was never ſo much as thought to be the *Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches*; or to have power to impoſe new Articles upon the whole Church: eſpecially ſuch large ones, as take in all the definitions of that Council of *Trent*; which they themſelves are not agreed to this day, how to expound.

Nor had that Synod, if theſe Articles could have been ſhown to be contained in the old Creed, any power to explain it, and declare them (according to what they confeſſed at the *Florentine* Council) being far from a General Council; no, not of theſe *Weſtern* parts of the World.

And clearly ſhowed it ſelf to be but a factious Party in the Church, by that very Explication which they made of this Article, the *holy Catholique Church*: which they thus expound, *the holy Catholique*, *Apoſtolique* Roman *Church*, *the Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches*. For it is certain the Apoſtles could not intend the *Roman* Church ſhould be comprehended under the *Catholique* Church, any more than every other Church, which was then, or ſhould be hereafter; becauſe it was not in being: there was no *Roman* Church at all, when notwithſtanding, the Church was *Catholique*.

And hereby Salvation is impiouſly confined to the *Roman* Church alone, by making the *Catholique* Church of no larger extent than that.

And this againſt the reſolution of their greateſt Doctors, who think it no matter of Faith, to be perſwaded that *the Apoſtolique See is fixed to* Rome. Which *Bellarmine (b)* proves from hence, becauſe neither Scripture nor Tradition affirm it. Nay, if Chriſt had bidden *Peter* to place his See at *Rome*, he doth not think it would follow, that he placed it there immoveably. And therefore no Man, according to their own ſenſe, is bound to believe the *Apoſtolical* Church cannot be ſeparated from the *Roman*; which if it ſhould happen, and the Apoſtolick See be removed, ſuppoſe to *Paris*; the Creed muſt be altered again, and it muſt run thus: *I believe the holy Catholique and Apoſtolique Pariſian Church, the Mother and Miſtreſs of all Churches.*

(b) L. IV. *de Pont. Romano cap.* 4.

In which latter part of the Expoſition to this Article, they force Men to ſwear to a downright falſhood. For if the *Roman* Church be the *Mother* of all Churches, ſhe muſt be the Mother of her Grand-mother, the Church of *Jeruſalem*. And it is no truer that ſhe is the *Miſtreſs* of all Churches: For all Churches were not taught the Faith by her; nor do they own her Authority over them.

But it is time to draw to an end of this matter.

We in this Church of *England*, have always profeſſed and preſerved a true reverence to the IV. firſt General Councils. One, or rather two, of which hath forbidden under the greateſt penalties, any Man to produce, or compoſe, or offer, any other Faith, beſides that eſtabliſhed by the Fathers at *Nice*: which *Theodoret* (*c*) in innumerable places calls Ἔκθεσις the *Expoſition of Faith*, and πίστις ἐκτεθεῖσα, the *Faith expounded*, the Apoſtolical Faith explained.

(c) L. I. *Hiſt. Eccleſ. c* 7. *L.* II. *c.* 22. *L.* IV. *c.* 2.

And therefore, even for this reaſon alone, we cannot receive the Creed of this Council at *Trent*, which is manifeſtly *another Faith*; added to the Confeſſion of the *Nicene*

Nicene Creed: which old Creed, it is madneſs (as the *Greeks* at *Florence* ſaid) to think inſufficient. For it is to think they were all damned for 1500 Years and more, who knew nothing beyond this, neceſſary to be believed: which no Man in his wits can believe.

For it is contrary to the very Faith it ſelf; which teaches us, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks, *to believe this in the firſt place, that there is nothing to be believed beyond this.* And we believe ſo, with the greateſt reaſon, becauſe to admit any other Articles of Faith, is to make endleſs *Schiſms* in the Church; as to believe contrary Articles, is to fall into dangerous *Hereſies.* We know not where to ſtay, if we reſt not here: for by the ſame Authority, that made theſe, more additions may be made continually, without end.

There is therefore no ſuch Authority in the Church, that can do this: but that Church which pretends to it, hath thereby forfeited the Authority, which otherwiſe it might have had. As the Church of *Rome* hath done: which in the concluſion of that Council, contradicted what it aſſerted in the beginning. For there, in its entrance, as I obſerved (*d*), they thinking it neceſſary, according to the example of the Fathers, to make, in the very firſt place, a confeſſion of their Faith; and pretending to arm themſelves thereby, as with a Shield, againſt all Hereſies, they repeat the Creed, *quo Sancta Romana Eccleſia utitur*; which the holy *Roman* Church uſeth, as *that Principle in which all that profeſs the Faith of Chriſt, neceſſarily agree; and the firm and ONELY Foundation, againſt which the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail.* And they think fit to expreſs it *totidem verbis*, in ſo many words, *as it is read in all Churches:* And then they ſay, the *Nicene Creed*, and not one word more.

(*d*) *Seſſ.* III. *Decretum de Symbolo fidei.*

Which is a plain Confeſſion, that this was the Faith *of all Chriſtians*, and no more, till that time; that it was the *Only firm Foundation*; that which was *read in all Churches*; in which *all agree*; *the Shield* againſt all Hereſies; the whole Faith then *uſed in the Roman Church*. And therefore with what Conſcience could they make ſuch a diviſion, and miſerable deſtruction, in the Chriſtian World, as they have done; by a vaſt number of new Articles, in which all Chriſtians neither do, nor can agree; and which were not to be found in their own Creed before?

No reaſon can be given of this, but the immenſe ambition of that Church, to give Law to all others. Unto which we cannot with a good Conſcience ſubmit: eſpecially when they impoſe ſuch a heavy Yoke, as this belief. Which is the true *Makebate* between them and us; the manifeſt cauſe of that fearful Schiſm, which they, not we, have made, by altering the true *Catholique* Faith, and Church, and Communion into a *Roman*.

This is the true diſtinction between them and us. We are *Catholiques*; they are *Romans*. We believe the *Catholique Faith* of all Chriſtians; they (as diſtinguiſht from us) believe the *Roman Faith*, which none believe but themſelves. We believe that which hath been *ever believed*; they believe that which was *never believed*, till yeſterday, in compariſon with the Ancient Faith. Ours is the belief of the whole Body of Chriſtian People; theirs the belief of a Sect.

For the *Truth* I have ſhown, which ought to be ſupported in the Church, in nothing elſe but thoſe *uncontroverted myſteries of godlineſs*, contained in the Apoſtles Creed: which I have proved to be the *only Catholique Doctrines*, embraced by all Churches whatſoever. They being not the Doctrines of a Sect meerly, but in which

we,

we, the *Roman*, the *Greek*, the *Ethiopian*, the *Syrian*, and all other Christians are perfectly agreed.

There are particular Men, and some small companies of them, here and there, who understand some few of these Doctrines otherwise than they ought; but there is no national Church, of any Country, but entertains all these intirely and sincerly, as they have been expounded from the beginning, according to the *Nicene Creed* (which by the way, is the only Creed the *Abassines* have, that Creed called the *Apostles*, being not found among them (*e*)) and thereby are members of Christ's Body, though they do not believe other Doctrines; which are only boldly called *Catholique*, by the Roman Church, but are not truly so: but only *particular* Doctrines of their own Church in which the Catholique Faith and Church is not concerned. As they themselves confess, by admitting persons into the Catholique Church (which I noted before) unto remission of sins, and eternal life, without any other belief, but that which we profess.

(*e*) *Ludolph. Histor. Æthiop. l.3 c.5. num.* 20.

Which makes us think that we might more safely swear, they themselves believe this to be sufficient; than they swear, as they do, that none can be saved without the new Faith, which they have added to the ancient Creed.

I have been the larger in this *second* observation, because it is of great moment for the setling of our minds in peace, about right belief: and this being setled, I may sooner dispatch those that follow.

III.

And the next is, that these therefore, and these alone are the *fundamental Truths*, upon which our Religion, and the very Church it self is built.

By

By *fundamental* Truths or Doctrines, we mean such Catholique principles, as are necessarily to be distinctly believed by every Christian: whereby they being built as it were, upon them, become a Church.

Such truths no doubt there are; for the Church being called here the *House of God*, must have a Foundation. Which Foundation is either *Personal* or *Doctrinal*. The *personal* foundation is *Christ*, the chief Corner-stone, and the Apostles and Prophets, as Ministers of his, who laid this foundation. *Ephes.* II. 20. The *Doctrinal* are those grand Truths, taught by them; which make up our Faith in Christ. That *Common Faith*, as it is called *Titus* I. 4. that Faith, which is *alike precious, in all* 2 Pet. 1. 1. the *first principles of the Oracles of God*, Heb: V. 12. (or as it is literally in the Greek, *the Elements of the beginning of the Oracles of God*) *the principles of the Doctrine of Christ*, or *the word of the beginning of Christ*, Hebr. VI. 1. *the form*, or *draught*, the *breviate or summary* (as it may be translated) of *sound words* or *doctrines*, 2 Tim. I. 13. *the Faith once*, or *at once delivered to the Saints*, Jude 3. and particularly *committed to the trust* (1 *Tim.* VI. 20.) of those who were to instruct others, in the *common Salvation*.

And what can those truths be, but those great Doctrines contained in the Creed; which, it appears from what I have said, the Apostles left in all the Churches which they planted? For we find these were in every Church, as *Irenæus* assures us; and these *altogether one*, as *Tertullian* speaks, and *the immovable, unreformable Rule of Faith*: and therefore may thence conclude, they were that παραθήκη which S. *Paul* deposited with *Timothy* 1. VI. 20. that *good*, or that *fair, most excellent thing deposited* with him, or *commended* (as an ancient Writer translates it) to his trust, to be preserved

ved by him: the Creed, as *Cyril** of *Hieruſalem* pithily ſpeaks, being ἀνακεφαλαίωσις σύντομος τ ἀναγκαίων δογμάτων, *a brief ſumm of neceſſary Doctrines.*

* *Catech.* IV. *p.* 24 *edit. Pariſ.* 1640.

In ſome ſenſe, it is true, there is nothing revealed in Holy Scripture, but it may be called fundamental; if we reſpect only the divine Authority, by which it comes unto us: upon which account nothing there delivered may be denyed, but ought to be believed, with all humility, when the knowledge of it is offered to us. But if we reſpect the matter and moment of all things contained therein, we cannot but ſee there is a great difference; and that the knowledge of every thing there is not equally neceſſary, but we may be truly pious though we ſhould be ignorant of ſome of them. For who can think, for inſtance, that it is of the ſame neceſſity, to be able to give an account of the *Genealogy* of our Saviour (mentioned I. *Matth.* III. *Luke*) and to believe that he is the *Son of God, made fleſh* for our Salvation?

That *foundation* therefore which was laid in every Church (as it was at *Corinth* 1· III. 11.) were ſuch Doctrines concerning *Jeſus Chriſt*, as every Chriſtian was bound to learn, and actually believe: in other points it ſufficed, if they had a pious preparation of mind to learn and believe any thing revealed in the Scriptures, when it was ſufficiently cleared to them.

Now theſe *two* things, that there are ſuch *fundamental* truths, or *firſt principles*, and that they are no other than thoſe contained in the *Creed*; ought to be aſſerted and maintained for the honour and glory of God our Saviour: which is much concerned herein. For it tends much to the glory of the Almighty lover of Souls, that it ſhould be believed he doth not lay equall weight upon all truths, nor made them alike neceſſary to be received, for the obtaining his favour and grace: and that it

ſhould

ſhould be certainly known, and be without Controverſie and queſtion, what thoſe truths are, which he expects ſhould be received and heartily embraced, in order to our Salvation. For otherwiſe, the moſt of Chriſtian people muſt neceſſarily periſh: who either are not capable of knowing more than theſe great things, or have not the means of knowing more, or not with any certainty: but muſt be content to reſt here. As well they may; for why was the Creed called by the name of the *Symbol* of Faith, but becauſe it was the mark, or ſign, which might ſerve to diſtinguiſh *true Chriſtians*, who embraced it, from *Infidels*, or *misbelievers*, who did not receive it, or were defective in it?

This is the true reaſon of the name of *Symbol* which is as much as *teſſera & ſignaculum, quo inter fideles & perfidos ſecernitur* (*f*), the token, *mark, or badge, whereby the faithful were known and diſtinguiſht from the perfidious.* And therefore it comprehends briefly all the Fundamental points of Faith: elſe it could not be a diſtinctive *note* or *character*, ſufficient to ſever right Believers from Infidels, Hereticks, and Apoſtates.

(*f*) *Maximus Taur. de Trad. Symb.*

But ſo it was, that they who owned this Creed, were owned for Chriſtians; they who did not confeſs it, were rejected: for by a Man's anſwer to this, who was examined, he was diſcovered (juſt as a Soldier is by the *Word*) *ſi hoſtis ſit, an ſocius* (as both *Iſidore*, and *Ruffinus* before him ſpeaks) *whether he were an Enemy, or a fellow Souldier of Jeſus Chriſt.* To this *Teſt* alone every one was brought, by this *touch-ſtone* he was tried, whether he were a Chriſtian of the right Stamp, or a falſe adulterate coyn (as the Ancients ſpeak) which is a demonſtration that they lookt upon this as a perfect ſummary of the Catholique Faith: *ſufficient of it ſelf* (as you heard *Athanaſius* (*g*) ſpeaks) *for the overthrow of all impiety, and for the eſtabliſhment of piety in Chriſt.* Nay, this

(*g*) *Epiſt. ad Epictetum.*

ſenſe

ſenſe of the word *Symbol*, is owned by the *Roman* Catechiſm it ſelf. *Cap.* 1. *Quæſt.* 3.

IV.

From whence it neceſſarily follows, that no man can juſtly be *called an Heretick*, who heartily embraces, and ſtedfaſtly holds to this Faith. How ſhould he, when there is no *Catholique*, no *Fundamental* Article of Chriſtian Truth; but he is perſwaded of it, and profeſſes it? No part of that Creed, which is the *Sign*, the *Mark*, and *Note*, as you have heard, whereby Chriſtians are approved, and diſcerned from misbelievers, as well as unbelievers, which he doubts of, and doth not acknowledge.

It is a very lamentable thing, that the imputation of Hereſie ſhould be ſo frequent and familiar among Chriſtians; upon the account of different Opinions only, which they are paſſionately in love withal, though no parts of the Catholique Faith. They of the Church of *Rome* eſpecially are ſo foully guilty of this, and ſo ſtrangely fiery, that they not only account us Hereticks; but look upon us as little better than *Infidels*, nay ſeem to have more kindneſs for *Jews*, which they tolerate among them, when they will not ſuffer us: who believe all the Creeds that were known in the Church, for above 1500 years. For they call themſelves *Catholiques*, in diſtinction from us: whom they will not allow to be members of the *Catholique Church*; though we have a clearer title to it than themſelves. For I have ſhown that we unfeignedly believe whatſoever is truly *Catholique*, and reject nothing but what is merely *Roman*.

We embrace that *form of Faith*, which they themſelves ſay (*h*) was compoſed by the Apoſtles for this very end, *that all might think and ſpeak the very ſame thing; and that there*

(*b*) *Catech. Rom. pars* 1. *cap.* 1. *Q.* 2.

there might be no ſchiſms among them, whom they had called to the unity of Faith: but they might be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind and in the ſame judgment.

It is not our fault, then, that there is not this unity and perfect agreement; for we ſtedfaſtly hold that which ſhould thus link us all together: but it is their fault; who have forſaken this Apoſtolical method, by making *another form of Faith*, which inſtead of uniting hath broken Chriſtians all in pieces. For we cannot agree to that, becauſe it doth not contain Catholique truths, which according to *Vincentius* his rule, have been held *every where, always and by all*: but are the Tenents only of a particular Church; which hath no power to lay any other *Foundation*, than that which was long ago laid, in the truly *Catholique Church*.

Which *Catholique Church* we believe better than themſelves, who appropriate the name of *Catholiques* to their own party: and thereby reſtrain the Catholique Church, to thoſe of their opinion. This certainly was the Hereſie of the *Donatiſts*: who eſteemed all other Chriſtians to be no better than *Pagans* (*i*): and were reproved, by the true Catholiques, juſt as we now anſwer for our ſelves, in ſuch words as theſe, *Do you call one a Pagan, after the profeſſion of the Faith? Can he be a Pagan who hath believed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt?* For that is a *ſhort Creed*, which comprehends all the Articles of the Chriſtian Faith, as S. *Hilary* (*k*) diſcourſes; who not only calls this *forma fidei certa*, the certain form of Faith: but (having mentioned thoſe words, *Go baptize them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*) asks this queſtion, *what is there, that is not contained in that ſame Sacrament, of humane Salvation? or what is there, that remains or is obſcure? All things are full and perfect, as coming from him that is full and perfect.* And thus he concludes

(*i*) *Optatus L. III. edit. Pariſ. 1631.*

(*k*) *L. 2. de Trinitate.*

cludes all his Books on that Subject, with this Prayer (*l*). *I beseech thee, preserve this undefiled Religion of my Faith, and grant me this voyce of my Conscience to the last breath: that what I professed in the Symbol of my Regeneration, being baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, I may always obtain,* viz. *I may adore thee our Father, and thy Son, together with thee; and do honour to thy Holy Spirit, who is of thee by thine only begotten. For he is a sufficient witness to Faith, who said, Father, all mine are thine, and thine are mine, my Lord Jesus Christ, who remains in thee, and from thee, and with thee always God: who is blessed for ever and ever.* (*l*) L. XII. de Trin.

Which I the rather mention because it serves to illustrate the prudence and charity of S. *Austin* and the rest of the Christian Bishops of those days, who though they looked upon the *Donatists* as Hereticks (in denying *the Church to be Catholique* by confining it to themselves) yet distinguished them from such Hereticks, as erred in the prime, and most Fundamental truths of our Religion; about the Divinity, and the Incarnation of our Christ and such like. That is, they made a difference even in the Articles of Faith, and lookt upon some as more Fundamental than others: being of more importance, and of greater weight and moment: and therefore judged more mildly of them, than they did of such, as denyed the Holy Trinity; or held any Doctrines which impeached the glory of the Father, or of the Son, or of the Holy Ghost. And therefore they still called these *Donatists*, Brethren; they pitied them as Men seduced by their Guides, and professed sincere love and affection to them, whether they accepted it or no. Though such was the peevishness of that Sect, that they abused this charity of good Catholique Christians towards them; just as they of the Church of *Rome* do our charity now. For from thence they took occasion to

argue that they were in the right, even by the Conceſſions of their Adverſaries; which juſtified both them and their heretical Schiſm. For *you*, ſaid they, (*m*) *can find no faults in our baptiſm, nor conſequently in our Faith, into which we baptize; for if you could, you would baptize thoſe over again who come from us to you, as we baptize thoſe again who come from you to us.* Which is as much as to ſay, you allow there is a Church and Salvation among us, but we allow no Church, no Salvation among you; therefore it is ſafeſt for all to joyn with us, not with you.

(*m*) *Auguſt. L. 2. contra lit. Petiliani. cap. ult.*

Which is the very Charm whereby they of the Church of *Rome* endeavour now to work upon the ſpirits of ſimple people among us: though no wiſer, than this argument of a company of mad men would be if they had ſo much cunningremaining as to ſay to us, we deny you to be Men, but you allow us to be Men, therefore we are fit for all Mens ſociety, not you, who are but a herd of Beaſts. And what S. *Auſtin* anſwers to the *Donatiſts*, is a full anſwer to the preſent *Romaniſts*; which is this in ſhort (*n*) (for it is beſides my buſineſs, to do more than mention theſe things) *when we ſpeak favourably of you, it is for the ſake of What you have of ours, not for what you have of your own: let that which you have of ours be ſet aſide, and we approve of nothing at all among you.*

(*n*) *L. 1. de Baptiſmo contran. Donatiſtas C. X.*

But I will not further enlarge upon this, nor ſay much of the next: which is very plain.

V.

They therefore, who condemn thoſe as Hereticks, who Excommunicate them and pronounce Anathema's againſt them, that believe the whole Catholique Faith; are the great diſturbers of the Chriſtian World, and the true cauſe of the Diviſions and breaches that are in the Body of Chriſt. And who they are that do thus,

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is visible to every eye: the Church of *Rome* having thought fit not to rest satisfied, with the simplicity of those often mentioned Catholique fundamental Truths, which are without Controversie and unquestionable; but, as if that Faith which the old Christians thought compleat, they take to be defective, have adjoyned as many more *new Articles*, to the old body: and that under the pain of damnation, if we do not believe them.

I have told you what they are, and if you look them over again, you will find that upon those have all the Contests risen between us and them. The necessary fundamental Truths, which constitute the Church (which was built upon no other for many Ages) are on both sides unquestioned: but because we question, or rather deny those which they would impose, which we are certain are no part of the Christian Doctrine, they call us Hereticks. That is, because we will not yield Obedience to their usurpt authority; because we cannot believe their new inventions, to be Catholique, and fundamental Doctrines. Here is the true reason of all the miserable ruptures that are in this part of the World: nay, this is the just grievance and complaint of all Christians (who know any thing of these matters) but themselves alone.

VI.

And their guilt is herein the greater, because the best learned among themselves have confessed these *Additions* to the Creed, to be *doubtful opinions*; *unnecessary* and superfluous Doctrines; *Novelties* unknown to the ancient Church. Concerning every one of which (*three* things) our Authors have given the clearest evidence.

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1. The first of them (the *doubtfulness* of those Doctrines) appears in this, that there is not only *variety*, but *contrariety* of judgment about them, in their own Church: which argues plainly great perplexity and uncertainty. Of which there needs no other proof (as Doctor *Potter* (*o*) observes) but the famous Books of *Bellarmine*; who in the entrance upon every Question there stated, gives an account of the Contentions and Contradictions of those, who have written upon it among themselves. And at this day they are not better agreed in the Explication of several Points in difference between us: particularly about the *Worship given to Images, and the Invocation of Saints*; which some of their greatest Doctors, mollifie and sweeten (as they do other points) into downright Heresie, as such Explications are accounted by others.

(*o*) Answer to Charity mistaken, p. 69.

See the late Answer to the Bishop of *Meaux*'s Exposition of Faith.

2. The very same may be clearly shewn out of their own Authors, and hath been demonstrated by our Divines concerning the *Second* thing, that those Doctrines are *not necessary*, but *superfluous*. For the *Roman Catechism* (*p*) it self having observed that their Ancestors had most wisely distributed all that belongs to saving Doctrine, into these four heads (for the help of the Peoples understanding and memory) the *Apostles Creed*, the *Sacraments*, the *Decalogue* and the *Lord's Prayer*; immediately confess, concerning the first, *that all things which are to be held by the Discipline of the Christian Faith, whether they have respect to the knowledge of God, or to the Creation and government of the World, or to the redemption of Mankind, or belong to the rewards of the good, and the punishments of the bad, are contained in the Doctrine of the Creed.* From whence this question naturally arises, how come so many new Articles to be made necessary, if all things belong-

(*p*) *Præfat. Sect.* 12.

belonging to the Christian Faith be contained in the Apostles Creed? I can see no reason for it, but only to maintain the grandeur of the *Roman* Church: for there is no more *simply necessary* for all to be believed (as *Bellarmine* himself confesses (*q*)) but the Articles of that Creed; and therefore the rest are *superfluous*, and ought to be discarded, as not so needful but that Men may be saved without them.

(*q*) L. IV. *de Verbo Dei*, C. XI.

3. And for the *Third*, that they are mere *Novelties* unknown to those in old time, there are the like confessions of ingenuous Men amongst them. *Æneas Sylvius* afterward Pope *Pius* II. confesses, (*r*) that *before the time of the Council of* Nice, *little regard was had to the* Roman *Church*. Which is a plain contradiction to Pope *Pius* the fourth's Article of New Belief, that she is the *Mother and Mistress of all Churches*: for none can doubt but they understood their duty in those days, and practised it also, to their Betters, especially to a Parent.

(*r*) Epist. 288.

The same may be said of the *Doctrine of Transubstantiation, which some School-men have said not to be very ancient: among which are* Scotus *and* Gabriel Biel. They are the words of *Suarez*, (*s*) unto whom many other testimonies may be added of the Doctors of that Church: particularly *Alphonsus* à *Castro*, who saith the *ancient Writers spake very seldom of Transubstantiation*: he should have said, Not at all, for *Cassander* honestly acknowledges it to be a *Novelty*. (*t*)

(*s*) *Disput. Tom.* 3. *Disp.* 30.

(*t*) See a late Treatise of Transubstantiation, by an Author of the Roman Communion, Part I.

The like is acknowledged of the *Sacrifice of the Mass*: which neither *Thomas Aquinas* nor *Gabriel Biel*, long after him, believed to be *proper*, or *propitiatory*; but give the same account that we do, why the celebration of this Sacrament is called a Sacrifice of Christ, *viz.* because *the Images of things are called by the names of the things which they represent*, (for which S. *Austin* is quoted)

quoted) and *because by this Sacrament we are made partakers of the benefits of Christ's Passion* (*u*).

(*u*) *Summæ Par.* III. *Q.* 83. *Artic.* 1. *Respond.*

That *Purgatory* was for a good while *unknown, and but lately known to the whole Church*, is confessed by our Bishop *Fisher* (*x*): who by the *whole Church*, means only the *Latin* Church; for in the same place he saith, *to this day it is not believed by the* Greeks. The same he saith of *Indulgences*; *which began with Mens fears of Purgatory*.

(*x*) *Ross. contra Luth. Art.* XVIII.

The same I might observe of the *Seven Sacraments* and the rest of their Articles; but I will only observe the contradiction to which they swear in the very first new Article, wherein they declare that they embrace *Apostolical and Ecclesiastical Traditions*: and yet consent at the same time (by swearing to all that is decreed in the Council of *Trent*) to administer the Holy Communion but in one kind; which for a thousand Years and more (in some places for 1300 Years) was administred in both kinds every where, even in the *Roman* Church, by an undoubted *Apostolical Tradition*, and *Ecclesiastical custom and practice*: which continues in all other Churches to this day.

Which observation evidently convinces them to be guilty of the most fearful sin, in cursing and damning those, who do not receive these *Novel* Doctrines: though they faithfully embrace all the Doctrines of the truly Catholique Faith; and had rather die than deny any part thereof.

But let us be of good comfort; we are safe enough, notwithstanding all these *Anathema's*, which they thunder out against us: For I have proved, that were these Doctrines true, as they are certainly false, which they press upon us; yet we should not be *Hereticks*, if we did not believe them; and so not fall, upon this account, under the sentence of damnation. Because it is only the denial of the great and fundamental Truths, that can make

make us incur such a danger: other Truths there are of which we may be ignorant, without danger of perishing; provided we still hold the Foundation, and *keep the Faith*, as the Apostle speaks, with a life according to it.

They themselves therefore knew that these terrible *Anathema's*, are but *bugbear* words, which they use to affright Children withal: For they who can read what the wisest and best of them write, will find that they confess, these new Articles to be superfluous; while they plainly say the Apostles Creed contains all things necessary to Salvation.

Thus *Gregory* of *Valentia* *, *The Articles of Faith contained in the Creed, are as it were the first Principles of Christian Faith — in which are comprized the summ of Evangelical Doctrine, which all are bound explicitely to believe. —— Thus the Fathers judge when they affirm this Creed was composed by the Apostles, that all might have a short Summary of those things which are to be believed, and are scatteredly contained in the Scriptures.* Thus also writes *Filiucius* and a great many more: even the *Trent Catechism* it self, as I have shown before. So that we have nothing to do; but to *hold fast* that which we have been taught from the beginning, and to make it the Rule of our Lives, as well as of our Faith.

* *In secunda secundæ Disp.* 2. Q. 7.

And that now, I must tell you, for a Conclusion of this part of my Discourse, is the Grand Truth of all; the main point of the Christian belief: that *the intention of all Divine Truths, and of Faith it self, is to make us truly godly.* They can do us no service, if they do not produce this effect.

Whence it is that in this very Epistle of S. *Paul*, he calls Christianity *the Doctrine that is according unto godliness*, 1 *Tim.* VI. 3. and a little after, calls it *godliness*, v. 6. *But Godliness*, that is the Christian Religion, *with*

contentment is great gain. And indeed we may well be contented, with the Christian Faith and Hope, and think our selves happy in such glorious expectations hereafter: nay look upon our selves, as exceeding great gainers, whatsoever we lose here upon this account, if we lose not the hope of immortal life.

In the Epistle to *Titus* also, in the very first Verse, he calls it *the truth which is after godliness:* which is the very Truth, that is the subject of my Discourse; as appears by what follows, when the Apostle saith it is *a mystery of godliness.* Not a cunning device to get Mony, to advance our worldly Grandeur and Pomp; much less a crafty Artifice to excuse us from living well, or to palliate wickedness, and show us a way, how to be saved though we live ungodly (which is the great drift of too many Doctrines, wherewith the World is troubled) but a wonderful contrivance of the Wisdom of Heaven, effectually to root out all Impiety, to plant all manner of Vertue in our Hearts; and to take all kind of excuse from us, if we do not become truly good.

Whence it is that the Apostle describes Christian Women, in this Epistle to *Timothy* II. 10. by this Character, that *they profess godliness. Let them be adorned,* saith he, *as becomes women professing godliness, with good works.* Not meerly professing the *Truth,* or the *Faith,* but *Godliness*; which comprehends all Christian Vertue: though if he had said, professing the Truth, it had been of the same import; because *that truth, is godliness.*

Hence all the Truths I have mentioned, are called *Fundamental*; not only because the Church is built upon them, but because they are the Foundation of all Christian practice, which ought to be superstructed upon them. And therefore let us neither be ignorant of this; nor let our knowledge of it be empty and idle, without effect. That is, *First,*

First, Let us not be ſo fooliſh as to imagine we ſhall obtain Salvation meerly by being of a right Belief; and holding the right Faith. Which is not an unneceſſary caution; for this ſeems to be the very buſineſs of a great many Men in the World, to put Men in hope of life eternal; if they do but quit that, which they call Hereſie, and embrace the Faith they propound unto them: though their hearts and lives remain juſt as they were before, without any real amendment. This is certainly not a *Myſtery of Godlineſs*, but the very *Myſtery of Iniquity:* not the Wiſdom of God, but the Witchcraft of the Fleſh, the World, and the Devil, to lead them ſecurely into deſtruction.

But *we have not thus learned Chriſt*, as the ſame Apoſtle ſpeaks elſewhere, (IV. *Epheſ.* 20, 21.) *if ſo be we have heard, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jeſus: that we put off, concerning the former converſation, the old man, which is corrupt, according to the deceitful luſts; and that we be renewed in the ſpirit of our minds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteouſneſs, and holineſs of truth.* Mark here what the *Truth* is, *as it is in Jeſus*, (that we may not be *deceived* by our own, or others *luſts*) that is, in the Chriſtian Religion: it is that which teaches us to abandon all wickedneſs, and not to think of throwing a covering over it to hide it, but to put it off: that which renews us in the very ſpirit of our minds; which makes us new Creatures; and really reſtores the Divine Image in us, in Rightouſneſs and ſincere Holineſs.

Thus we have learned Chriſt, thus we are conſtantly taught, in this Church: And therefore,

Secondly, If the Truth hath not this effect upon us, in vain do we pride our ſelves in the name of *Orthodox believers*. Upon ſuch S. *John* hath paſſed this cenſure, 1 I. 6. *If we ſay we have fellowſhip with him, and walk in darkneſs, we*

lye, and do not the truth. Where you may obſerve, by the way, there is a *doing of the truth* expected from us, and not meerly *believing* it.

It was expected from the very Heathen, proportionable to what they knew: for they are accuſed by S. *Paul* upon this ſcore, that *they held the Truth of God in unrighteouſneſs*, I. *Rom.* 18. Some Truth they knew, and it taught them to do better than they did: and their not doing ſo, was their condemnation. And if natural Truth, taught them *righteouſneſs of life*, much more doth this Divine Revelation which God hath made in Chriſt Jeſus, inſtruct us therein: and if they were found guilty for holding *that* Truth in unrighteouſneſs, much more ſhall we be found ſo for holding, in the like wickedneſs, theſe *ſupernatural* Truths; which we know only by a ſpecial Grace of God; which hath revealed them unto us for this very purpoſe, to *teach us, that denying ungodlineſs and all worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly and godly in this preſent world*, 2 Tit. II. 12.

Which if we do not, mark the conſequence: either we ſhall not *hold the Truth*; or if we do, the Truth will not ſave us, but only ſerve to condemn us.

Sometimes by living wickedly Men loſe the very Truth, either in whole, or in part: as the Heathen, S. *Paul* there ſhows, did, I. *Rom.* 21, 22, 23. Read the words, and you will not wonder if the ſame ſad fate attend Mens Impiety now: which the Truths of the Goſpel ſo directly oppoſe; that if they cannot prevail with Men to leave their wickedneſs, their wickedneſs will prevail with them to leave the Truth.

This belief, for inſtance, that Jeſus Chriſt, the Eternal Son of God, who died for us, and roſe again, will come to judge us (which is the ſumm of Chriſtianity) is ſo manifeſtly againſt thoſe ſins which Men commit againſt his Laws, that, if they be perſwaded they ſhall

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be judged according to his Gospel, it must needs make them very uneasie in their sins. Which therefore if they will not quit, their sins will tempt them to be rid of this belief; which disquiets and disturbs them in the enjoyment of those Lusts, on which they have set their Heart.

Or if it have not this effect, to make them wholly disbelieve, the life and judgment to come; yet it tempts them to adulterate the Christian Faith (as too many Christians have done) and to devise easier terms of happiness than the Gospel propounds: inventing such a Religion, as will favour them in their sins, and comply with their inclinations to follow their foul Lusts, and yet not perish eternally. And it is not hard to show, if this were a proper place for it, that abundance of false notions, if not all, which Men have about *Faith*, have sprung from this cause.

But suppose Men do still hold the Truth, though in unrighteousness, what will they get by it? since it will not save them, but only serve to condemn them. For this is a part of the Evangelical Truth, as you read in the place now named (I. *Rom.* 18.) that *the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness.* And again we read in the next Chapter of *the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious,* (or will not yield to evident convictions) *and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doth evil,* &c. v. 6, 7, 8, &c.

Where you see there is an *obedience to the truth,* expected from us: unto which if we will not submit, but

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obey unrighteouſneſs; then that very Truth tells us we muſt expect nothing, but the inexpreſſible diſpleaſure of the Almighty, againſt every ſuch refractory oppoſer of the Truth, which he ſhould obey. There is no exception from this Rule; for (as it there follows, *v.* 11.) *there is no reſpect of perſons with God.*

Would to God they would ſeriouſly lay this to heart, who now ſeem to be poſſeſſed with a mighty Zeal for *Truth*, and for a *right Faith*: that they be not ſo deceived by this warm Zeal, as to miſs the *end of Faith, the Salvation of their Souls*; which can by no means be obtained, no not by Faith it ſelf, without an Holy Life.

PART

PART II.

What it is to be a Pillar and Ground of Truth: *and to whom this Office belongs.*

HAving ſhown with ſome care what the *Truth* is of which S. *Paul* ſpeaks (which was the firſt thing I propounded) the *two* next may be explained together with leſs pains: *viz. what*, and *who* is the *Pillar* and *Ground* of theſe great *Truths*, which are neceſſary to be believed by all, that will be ſaved.

I.

And as for the *firſt* of theſe, they of the Church of *Rome* would have us by a *Pillar and Ground*, to underſtand that which is the very *Foundation of our Faith:* that upon whoſe Credit and Authority all Chriſtian *Truth*, and the certainty of our Religion depends. For taking it for granted that the *Church* is this Pillar, and preſuming alſo that *they only* are the Church; they thence infer that we can be ſure of no Truth, but from them: and that they give authority and certainty, to the very Word of God it ſelf: and likewiſe, whatſoever the *Church*, *i. e.* they declare to be Truth, is therefore to be received: inſomuch that if they make any new Articles of Faith, we are to give a full aſſent to them; becauſe all Truth depends upon the credit of their Church.

This

This ſounds ſtrangely in the Ears of thoſe that are not accuſtomed to ſuch Language: and may be thought perhaps a miſrepreſentation of their Doctrine. But *Bellarmine* (to name no more) vouches this to be the Catholique ſenſe of this place: and from the words *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, proves that *the Church cannot err, either in Believing, or in Teaching* (*y*): and again, that *whatſoever the Church approves is true, and whatſoever it diſapproves is falſe* (*z*).

(*y*) L. II. *de Concil. autor. c.* 2.
(*z*) L. III. *de Eccleſ. Milit. c.* 14.

But this only ſhows that they are hard put to it, to find proofs for their high pretences. For it will appear, in the proceſs of this Diſcourſe, *firſt*, that it can never be proved, the words *Pillar and Ground*, have reſpect to the *Church*, and not rather to *Timothy*: for which there is good Authority as well as Reaſon. I ſhall let the Authority alone, till its proper place, and only note, *Secondly*, That there is good reaſon not to refer this to the Church; for having called the Church *a Houſe*, it doth not ſeem a congruous ſpeech, immediately to call the ſame Church a *Pillar*: as on the other ſide it is very agreeable, to call *Timothy* a *Pillar*, in that Houſe; and to wiſh him to behave himſelf therein, like other great Perſons, to whom, in other places, he gives the name of *Pillars*. But, *Thirdly*, if it do relate to the Church, it no more concerns the Church of *Rome*, than any other Church: and immediately relates to the Church of *Epheſus*, in which *Timothy* preſided. Which Church of *Epheſus* (*a*), with other Churches of the *Eaſt*, condemned this Headſhip of the Biſhop of *Rome*, upon which they build a Soveraignty over our Faith. And further, if we ſhould ſuppoſe *Fourthly*, That the Apoſtle reſpects the Church Univerſal; and likewiſe that it is not only bound in duty to be, but alſo actually is, the Pillar and Ground of Truth; yet, *Laſtly*, it can never be proved that he ſpeaks of any other *Truth*, but thoſe grand Fundamental Articles

(*a*) *Concil. Florent. Seſſ. ult.*

Articles of Faith, thoſe Catholique Doctrines which were once delivered to the Saints, and which, bleſſed be God, are maintained in every Church to this day: not of all truth whatſoever; much leſs of an abſolute freedom from all manner of error.

For, letting theſe things alone at preſent, I ſhall ſhew that this is all that can be meant by *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, if it refer to the Church (as I am content to admit) not that the Church (as they abſurdly affirm) is the very foundation of our Faith, upon which it relyes: but that *it firmly retains, upholds, and profeſſes* the Chriſtian Truth, againſt all the force, violence and oppoſition, of Earth and Hell, of Men and Devils, that indeavour to overthrow it.

That this is the natural import of the phraſe I will manifeſt, *Firſt*, from the propriety of the words; *Secondly*, from clear reaſon and the Holy Scripture.

I. *Firſt* from the propriety of the words in the Greek Language. In which στῦλος frequently ſignifies, ſuch a *Pillar* as ſtood before their common Halls and Courts of Judicature: upon which the Decrees and Orders of the Court, were wont to hang or be fixed. Unto which *Tertullian* alludes, when ſpeaking of an Article of the Creed (in the place above named *) he ſaith, *Unum opinor apud omnes EDICTUM DEI PENDET, I ſuppoſe one Edict of God hangs up among all*, viz. to be read by them: having juſt askt before, *quonam titulo Spes iſta proſcripta eſt: by what TITLE this hope (viz.* of the reſurrection) *is propoſed and held forth to all.* And the word ἑδραίωμα *ground* ſignifies not the *foundation*, but the *Seat* where any thing is placed; ſo as to be ſettled and laid up, to remain and abide there. And, at the moſt, can mean no more, than the *ſtay*, or *eſtabliſhment*, the *ſeat* or *ſettlement* of Truth:

* *L. de Reſurrect. Carnis, C.* 18.

βεβαίωσις, *Oecumenius* renders it, the *confirmation* of truth; or if we will have these words allude to a building, because the Church is here called *the House of the living God*, as elsewhere the *Temple of God*, (which is the same) they signifie no more but *supporters* and *upholders*, without which the edifice would fall to the ground. And the most we can make of them when they are applied to the *Church*, with respect to the *truth*, is this; that the Church sustains and keeps it from sinking, or falling, as a Pillar firmly setled upon a *Basis*, sustains and upholds the fabrick laid upon it. This consists in these three things, which I shall distinctly, though but briefly, mention: for the Reader's clear information in this matter.

First, The Church is that Body of Men, which preserves and keeps, which maintains and holds up the Christian Faith: which God hath committed to its care, as he did to the *Jews* the Divine Oracles, delivered in old times. And as the Church will answer it to God, and not be guilty of betraying its trust, it must constantly preserve the truth committed to it; that it be not lost and do not perish. This might be divided into *two*, that the Church is the keeper and Conservator of all the Holy Scriptures, and the Divine Truths contained therein: and that by faithful keeping them, it upholds and supports the Truth, as a Pillar doth the building which rests upon it. But this is sufficiently included in what follows.

Secondly, the Church is not only to preserve the Truth, but to profess it, and to give attestation to it: that is, to bear witness that this is the Truth of God, and this alone, which he hath revealed for the Salvation of Mankind. By which means it doth not only *hold up* the Truth, but *hold it out* to others; as the Sacred Edict or Decree of God; which all are to take notice of and observe. And so,

Thirdly,

Thirdly, It is by this means to promote and propagate the *Truth*, and not let it fall to the ground: as a building doth, when the Pillars, that ſupported it, are removed.

In brief; As Heretical Churches were the Pillars and Stays of falſhood; they maintained and defended it, they teſtified to it, and indeavour'd to continue it, and leave it to Poſterity: juſt ſo is the Church of Chriſt, the Pillar and Ground of *Truth*; it profeſſes the Chriſtian Faith, it maintains it as the Truth of God; and notwithſtanding all the perſecutions, troubles, loſſes, torments, whereby its Enemies would ſhake the conſtancy of thoſe who maintain the Truth, they teſtifie to it, and declare to future Generations, that *this*, as S. *Peter* ſpeaks, *is the true grace of God, wherein we ſtand.*

This is the firſt conſideration, to aſſure us of the true meaning of theſe words.

II. The *Second*, is as ſtrong; for plain reaſon makes it evident, that this, not the other, is the ſenſe of them. The Church, that is, cannot be the very foundation upon which the Truth is built, not that which gives it authority, and makes it to be Truth: for the quite contrary is declared by *Truth* it ſelf; that the Truth is the foundation upon which the Church is built, and which makes it to be a *Church*. So S. *Paul* inſtructs this very Church of *Epheſus*, who were *built upon the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner Stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together, groweth into an holy Temple in the Lord: In whom ye alſo are builded together, for an habitation of God through the Spirit*, II. Epheſ. 18, 19, 20. It was therefore a Church of Chriſt, becauſe it held the Truth, which He and his Apoſtles

taught. And ſo a great number of the Ancient Fathers expound thoſe words of Chriſt to S. *Peter*, *Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock*; *i. e.* upon the confeſſion of Faith which thou haſt made, upon that Truth thou haſt confeſt, *I will build my Church.* Matth. XVI.

We can own no Society of Men to be a Church of Chriſt, unleſs they profeſs the true Faith of Chriſt. And therefore the true Faith muſt be known before we can know whether they be a true Church or no, who call themſelves by that Name: and conſequently they do not give authority to the Truth, but the Truth to them; becauſe the Truth muſt be ſuppoſed, before they can have any authority.

Obſerve the above recited words I beſeech you; which ſay, the Church is built upon *the foundation of the Apoſtles and Prophets*, &c. *i. e.* upon the Truth revealed by them in the Goſpel. It is a Church by holding and believing this: for if this be not the thing which makes a company of Men to be *a Church of the living God*; tell me, why the *Mahometans* are not his Church? They are a ſociety of Men profeſſing ſome belief, and having ſome truth and devotion, and being governed by Laws as well as we. There is no reaſon why they belong not to the Church of Chriſt, but becauſe they have not *the Truth as it is in Chriſt.* Therefore the Church doth not make the Truth; but the Truth makes the Church: the Truth doth not rely upon the Church, becauſe it is before the Church, which relies upon it.

Which was the Doctrine of the Church it ſelf in after Ages; as it were eaſie to ſhew, if I intended to write a great Book. I will content my ſelf with two Teſtimonies in ancient times, the one is of S. *Chryſoſtome*, who thus expounds theſe very words, *the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth.* Not like that Judaical Temple: (ſaith he) for this is it, which keeps

keeps together and contains the Faith and the preaching (or Doctrine) ἡ γὰρ ἀλήθεια ἐστὶ τὸ ἐκκλησίας καὶ στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα. *For the Truth is both the Pillar and the Ground, or foundation of the Church*: The other is S. *Auſtin* in his third Book upon the *Creed*, to the *Catechumens* (*c*), which begins thus, *You know this* (*viz.* the Creed) to be the *foundation of the Catholique Faith, upon which the edifice of the Church aroſe, being built by the hands of the Apoſtles and Prophets.* And with this of *Gabriel Biel* in latter Ages, (*d*) *Catholique truths, without any approbation of the Church, are in the nature of the thing immutable, and immutably true: and ſo are to be accounted unchangeably Catholique.* Which brings to mind another remarkable ſaying of S. *Auſtin*, who after he had produced in his firſt and ſecond Books againſt *Julian* the *Pelagian*, the teſtimonies of XI. great Doctors, *viz. Irenæus*, *Cyprian*, *Reticius*, *Olympius*, *Hilarius*, *Ambroſius*, *Innocentius* (where, by the way, it is obſervable he mentions the Biſhop of *Rome* only as one of the eminent Biſhops, not as Head of them all) *Gregory Nyſſen*, *Baſil* of *Cæſarea*, *John Chryſoſtom*, *Hierom*, makes this reflection upon their conſent (which he lookt upon as the voyce of the Catholique Church), *Qui tamen veritati auctoritatem non ſuo tribuêre conſenſu*, &c. *who notwithſtanding did not give authority to the Truth by their conſent; but received teſtimony and glory by partaking of the Truth.*

(*c*) *Tom.* IX.

(*d*) *L.* 3 *in ſentent. Diſt.* 25. *Dub.* 3.

They endeavour indeed to put by ſuch evident conviction as this, by a little diſtinction; that though in *it ſelf* the Church is built upon the Truth, yet in *reſpect to us* the Truth is built upon the Church. Which appears already to be a vain conceit, unto thoſe who conſider; that the Church cannot be the foundation of Truth to us, unleſs we firſt know it to be the true Church of Chriſt; and indued with this priviledge from God to be *the Ground of Truth*; in this ſenſe which I am now confuting. But whence ſhould we know this? If it be ſaid, from

from the Truth which it profeſſes; then the Church is not the Foundation of the Truth to us, for we muſt know the Truth, before we can know that to be the true Church, which calls it ſelf the Foundation. If we ſay from the Church; then the Church is the *Pillar and Ground* of it ſelf; and we believe it to be the true Church, becauſe it ſays it is. Which is ſo abſurd and dangerous, that the *Mahometans*, as I ſaid, will be as true a Church as any elſe: they may boldly put in for their ſhare of this priviledge: Nay, if confidence, and power can carry it, ingroſs it wholly to themſelves.

It remains therefore that this is the true ſenſe of the words which I have given. The Church keeps the Truth, and keeps it up: It is the Conſervator of it, and preſerves it from falling to the ground: it proclaims it, and holds it forth to others: it continues the truth in the World, and ſettles it in mens minds: but it ſelf is built upon this Truth, not the Truth upon it. Which derives its authority from God, who ſent Jeſus Chriſt into the World to teach us his will, and gave him power to ſend his Apoſtles, as he had ſent him: *God bearing them witneſs, with ſigns and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, according to his own will.*

This will be the more plainly laid open, if I ſpend a little time, in ſhowing what is here meant by *the Church*, which is commonly thought to be *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*; and was the *third* thing propounded in the beginning to be explained.

III.

The *Church* or *Houſe of God*, ſignifies every where a company of Chriſtians united under their Paſtors, unto Chriſt their Head, by a ſincere Faith; and joyned one to another by Brotherly love and communion. Where

Where ever we find ſuch a Society of Men and Women, there is a Church: and all the Societies of this kind, throughout the World, make up that which we call the *Catholique*, or *Univerſal* Church; the whole body of Chriſt, or Chriſtian Church. Of which the Church of *Epheſus* here ſpoken of was a part: one eminent company of Chriſtians profeſſing the truly *Catholique* Faith, and joyned to *Timothy* as their chief Paſtor, for the worſhip and ſervice of Chriſt; and for to *be the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, as theſe words muſt be interpreted, if they relate unto the *Church*.

They indeed, who are now of the Roman Communion, underſtand by the *Church*, only the Paſtors of the Church. And ſome of them, this *Church repreſentative*, as it may be called; that is, the whole aſſembly of Chriſtian Biſhops, as many as can meet together, repreſenting all the Churches under their care. But others underſtand only one Biſhop alone, the Pope of *Rome*; who is then the *Church Virtual*, in whom all the power of all the Biſhops in the World is united. But as there are no ſuch notions of the Word *Church* in Scripture; ſo, if they be applied to this place, they will appear very wild fancies, unto any Man who will ſoberly conſider the ſcope of it. For it is very evident, that *the Church* is here mentioned as diſtinct from *Timothy*, who was the prime Paſtor of it, and who is directed how to behave himſelf in it. Therefore if this Church was *the Pillar of Truth*, the whole multitude of Believers at *Epheſus*, united under him and the reſt of their Paſtors, muſt be lookt upon as having an intereſt in this great priviledge and honour, as well as duty, to be the Conſervators and Supporters of the Chriſtian Faith, which they had received. For S. *Paul*, as I ſaid, is inſtructing *Timothy* how to demean himſelf, in this Society, which he calls the *Houſe* or family of God: that is, among true Believers in

in Christ, formed into a Society under the Government of their Guides: who were to take the greater care, that every one in the Church was well taught, instructed and ordered, because they were *the Pillar and Ground of Truth.*

This made S. *Paul* very solicitous, that *Timothy* should carry himself well, and be a good Pastor in that Church, of which the Holy Ghost had made him chief Overseer. And not knowing when he might have opportunity to see him, and give him personal instruction by word of mouth, he wrote this Letter to him for his direction; that he might fully understand how to discharge this Office. And therefore these words, it appears by the verse foregoing (*v.* 14.) relate partly to what went before, and partly to what follows. *These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thy self in the House of God, which is the Church of the living God, the Pillar and Ground of Truth. And without controversie, great is the mystery of godliness*, &c. Which whole Paragraph is to be understood as if he had said, in more words. 'Though I hope shortly to discourse with 'thee face to face, yet not knowing what may hinder and 'retard my hopes, I have sent the above written instruc-'tions to thee; not to trouble the Church with vain dis-'putations, about the rites of the Law, and such idle 'questions as the *Jews* are apt to raise: but, to remem-'ber (as I have said in the beginning of this Letter *v.* 4, 5. 'of the first Chapter) that *the end of the Commandment 'is charity*, the love of God and of our neighbour. This 'therefore teach them; and instruct them also to make '*prayers, supplications and intercession, with giving of 'thanks for all Men: for Kings, and all that are in au-'thority* (Chap. II. 1, 2, 3, 4.) teach them all likewise 'how to pray (*v.* 8.) and instruct the *Bishops* and the

'*Deacons*

'*Deacons* and all the reſt in their Office and Duty: for it 'is of great concernment, that they be well informed; 'becauſe this Church, over which thou art ſet, is the 'very *Seat of Truth*, which is not to be found in any o-'ther place, but in ſuch a company of Believers. Who 'ought to uphold and defend it, when thou art dead 'and gone; and therefore had need be well ſetled and 'eſtabliſhed in it: eſpecially in the great myſtery of 'godlineſs, wherein all Chriſtians agree, and about 'which there is no Controverſie. That ſo the Church 'may never let it go, and this Truth may not dye 'and fall to the Ground, when we are laid in our Graves; 'but be delivered to thoſe that come after, as the very 'Oracles of God.

Who now is there ſo blind, as not to be able to ſee, that by *the Church* is meant, not merely the ſupream Governour of the Church, which was *Timothy*; but all that company of Chriſtian people, under their ſeveral Biſhops and Teachers, who belonged to *Epheſus*. All of which S. *Paul* left *Timothy*, when he himſelf went into *Macedonia*, to take care of, and to charge that they *taught no other Doctrine* (as you read, 1. 3.) and in this *Houſe*, or Family he was, when S. *Paul* wrote this Epiſtle to him; not in a *General Council*, for there was none, in three hundred Year after this time. Therefore he doth not ſpeak of the *Church Repreſentative*, as it is called; much leſs of the *Church Virtual*, as they term it; that is, the Pope. For then, mark what ſence the words will make; *I have wrote to thee* (not knowing when I ſhall ſee thee) how to *behave thy ſelf in the Biſhop of* Rome: as if he would have us fancy *Timothy* in the Popes Belly; and himſelf gravely inſtructing him, how to carry himſelf with great circumſpection and diſcretion there.

I do not love to uſe ſuch words; but there are no other I can find ſo apt to repreſent the groſs abſurdity of their Doctrines, who take upon them to give infallible interpretations of Holy Scripture, from the Univerſal Biſhop, the grand and only Oracle of Chriſtendom, as they would have him eſteemed: or from ſuch Councils as they are pleaſed to call General, and can obtain their approbation. You ſee what godly ones we are like to have, if we give up our Faith to them: how they will pervert the plain words of God, to ſerve their own intereſt; and wreſt them from their natural and eaſie ſence, to another which is ſo forced, that there is no Man ſo rude but would readily diſcern the abſurdneſs of it, if he were permitted to read, and did conſider, the Holy Scripture. For their great Cardinal *Bellarmine* alledges theſe very words to prove that *General Councils, confirmed by the Pope, cannot err* (*e*): nay, *that particular Councils, approved by the Pope*, have the ſame priviledge (*f*): where it is evident to the weakeſt underſtanding, that the whole company of Chriſtians, that were at *Epheſus* united to their Paſtors (without which they could not be a Society or Company) are the Church here ſpoken of: and therefore are the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, (if this relate to the Church) and not merely ſome particular perſon in that Church: much leſs a General Council of all the Biſhops in the World; and leaſt of all, one Biſhop; in whom *Timothy* could not be ſaid, in any ſenſe, to be; as he is here ſaid to be in that Church, which is the *Pillar and Ground of Truth, viz.* in that Church whereof he was the chief Governour: which was the *Pillar and Ground of Truth* in that part of the World. For this is not an Office appropriated to any particular Church, but belonging to the Catholique Church, and to every ſingle Church, as it is a Member of the Whole.

(*e*) *Lib. 2. de Conſtil. Auctoritate C. 2. Claſſ. 2da.*
(*f*) *Ib. cap. 6. Denique.*

And

And here it will be very profitable, I think, to note theſe ſix things, for the full explication of this place of Scripture.

I. The firſt of them is that which I now mentioned; that every particular Church, one as well, and as much as another, is a *Pillar and Ground of Truth*; in that ſenſe which I have declared. This is not a prerogative which belongs to ſome one Church; but a priviledge, appertaining to the Univerſal; and to every particular, as a part of it. For if the Church at *Epheſus*, was a Pillar of Truth, as S. *Paul* here affirms; then by the ſame reaſon, the Church of *Antioch*, the Church of *Corinth*, the Church of *Rome*, and the Church of *Jeruſalem*, had the ſame authority. For that which made any one of them a Church, made the other ſo, *viz.* the true Faith of Chriſt there profeſſed, and union with their Paſtors, for the Divine ſervice: and therefore that honour or Office, which belong'd to one of them, muſt of neceſſity belong to another; becauſe they were but ſo many members of one and the ſame Body. That is, every one of them, in their ſeveral Countries, wherein they were planted, had the truth of God committed to them; which they were to maintain and ſupport unto the very death: and endeavour that every one, who was a Stranger to the *words of eternal life*, might by their means know and believe them.

And accordingly every Church hath contributed unto this, and no one Church, could ever with any reaſon pretend to be the ſole ſupporter or defender of the Chriſtian Truth. Of which there is this plain demonſtration, that then the Church is moſt of all the *Pillar and Ground*, or Buttreſs, as ſome tranſlate it, *of Truth*, when it is aſſaulted by Hereſies; and not only beats them off, but beats them down and ſuppreſſes them. Now all Hereſies were not quaſht and confounded by S. *Peter*

and his Succeſſors in the Church of *Rome*; but by other Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, and their Succeſſors in other Churches. This is demonſtrated by a learned Man, of the Roman Communion *, by XII. famous inſtances, out of a far greater number. S. *John* for example, not *Peter* or any of his Succeſſors, ſtruck down the *Nicolaitans*, S. *Paul* the *Nazarens* and *Cerinthians*, S. *Luke* the *Ebionites*, as he proves out of good Authors, particularly *Hyginus*: who relates how the Biſhops of other Sees (not the Biſhops of *Rome*) quaſht the *Ptolemaites*, the *Noetians*, and divers other Hereticks: as the Synod of *Antioch* did. *Paulus Samoſatenus* (g) and the firſt General Council of *Conſtantinople* (where *Damaſus* Biſhop of *Rome*, was not preſent, either by himſelf or his Legates) did *Eunomius* and other Hereticks. Which leads to the *ſecond* thing I would have obſerved.

* *Joh. Launoii Epiſt. pars Quinta Antonio Varillao p.* 35. &c.

(g) *Euſeb. L.* VII. *Eccleſ. Hiſt. c.* 22.

II. That every eminent *Paſtor* in the Church, who *laboured in the word and Doctrine*, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks in this Epiſtle, V. 17. had theſe very titles anciently beſtowed upon him, of *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, becauſe the *Biſhops* were the principal Truſtees with whom the Faith was depoſited (as may be obſerved in the words of *Irenæus* before mentioned, and many other ancient Writers, and in S. *Paul*'s words to *Timothy*, when he bids him to keep the *depoſitum* he had committed to him, and *commit the ſame* to other *faithful* or truſty perſons, who ſhould be able to teach it to others, 2 *Tim.* I. 14. II. 2.) and becauſe they were principal Inſtruments in defending the Truth againſt oppoſers; in propagating the Chriſtian Faith to thoſe who were ignorant of it; and in preſerving the reſt of the Church in the belief of the Truth, which they had entertained, by their conſtant inſtructions, and zealous exhortation, to *hold faſt what they had received*.

Nay,

Nay, we shall rarely, if at all, find any Bishop of *Rome*, called the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, but several other Bishops are frequently called by this name. S. *Basil* for instance (*h*), writing of the Bishop of *Neocæsarea* newly dead, bewails his loss very much, because he was ἐκκλησιῶν κόσμος, *the Ornament of the Churches*, στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας, (the very words of the Apostle here in this place) *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*; στερέωμα τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως, *a strong and firm establishment of Faith in Christ*, &c. And upon the same occasion writing to the Church of *Ancyra* (*i*) whose Bishop was called *Athanasius*, it appears by some of the foregoing Epistles) he saith, πέπτωκεν ἀνὴρ, στύλος τῷ ὄντι καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, *a Man is faln, who was indeed a Pillar and Ground of the Church.* And complaining in another Epistle (*k*) of the miserable estate of their Churches, he says, among other things, οἱ στύλοι καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἐν διασπορᾷ, *the Pillars and Ground of the Truth are dispersed:* the Bishops, he means, were banished from their Flocks. Which he bewails in another place in the very same Language, only putting both the foregoing parts of their Character together, οὓς ἐγὼ στύλους καὶ ἑδραίωμα, * &c. *whom I account the Pillars and Ground, both of the Truth and of the Church: and honour them so much the more, the further off they are banished from their Churches, and account that separation the greatest punishment.*

(*h*) *Epist.* LXII. *Tom.* II.

(*i*) *Epist.* LXVII.

(*k*) *Epist.* LXX.

* *Epist.* CCCXLIX.

In the very same Language S. *Gregory Nazianzen* addresses himself to S. *Basil* (*m*), whom he calls, στύλον καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας, πίστεως ἔρεισμα, καὶ πνεύματος καταγώγιον, *the Pillar and Ground of the Church, the prop of Faith, the habitation of the Spirit.* And so he calls *Athanasius*, στύλος τῆς ἐκκλησίας (*n*), *the Pillar of the Church:* and in another place (*o*), τὸ τῆς πίστεως ἔρεισμα, *the prop, or stay of the Faith.* And writing to *Eusebius*, Bishop of *Samosat* (*p*), he thus begins, *What shall I call thee*, στύλον καὶ ἑδραίωμα, &c.

(*m*) *Orat.* XIX. beginning.

(*n*) *Orat.* XXI.

(*o*) *Orat.* XXIII.

(*p*) *Epist.* XXIX. *Tom.* I.

Shall

Shall I call thee the Pillar and Ground of the Church, or a Light in the World, &c. *or the Stay of thy Country, or the Rule of Faith, or Embaſſador of the Truth, or all theſe together, and more than all theſe?*

(q) *De vita Moſis. Tom.* I. *p.* 226.

But that which is moſt worthy to be noted under this head is, that S. *Gregory Nyſſen* (q) expounds this very Text of *Timothy*, and makes *him*, not the Church, *the Pillar and Ground of Truth.* For diſcourſing concerning the Miniſters of the Divine Myſteries, as Pillars of the Houſe of God, he ſaith, ἡ Τιμόθεον καλὸν στύλον, &c. S. *Paul* wrought and faſhioned *Timothy* to *be a goodly Pillar, making him* (as he ſpeaks, *with his own voice*) στύλον καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἐκκλησίας καὶ ἀληθείας, *the Pillar and Ground of the Church, and of Truth.* As if he took the ſenſe of theſe words to be this, *But if I tarry long, that thou, who art the Pillar and Ground of Truth, maiſt know how to behave thyſelf in the Church*, &c. And indeed the Apoſtles are called στύλοι, Pillars in the II. *Gal.* 9. not only S. *Peter*, but *James* and *John* alſo. And here we are taught, as he truly obſerves, *that not only* Peter, James *and* John *were Pillars, not only* John *the Baptiſt was a burning Lamp:* ἀλλὰ πάντες οἱ δι' ἐκκλησίαν ἐρείδοντες, *but all that by themſelves ſupport the Church, all that by their work are ſhining lights, are called both Pillars and Lamps.*

Which names were afterward applied to Chriſtian Biſhops, by the moſt eminent Perſons in the Church; who hereby plainly declared, what they underſtood by theſe words of S. *Paul:* and that they lookt not upon this as a priviledge peculiar to any one Biſhop, or any one Church; but common to all Churches, and eſpecially to the principal Perſons in the Church, who were the Leaders and Guides of the reſt: and ſo more peculiarly intruſted with the preſervation of Divine Truth, and the chief Pillars and Supporters of the Faith. And thus *Origen* (or whoſoever he was that wrote the *Homilies* upon

upon the *Song of Songs* *,) ſeems to have underſtood this place; for having obſerved from hence that the *Church is God's Houſe*, and applied theſe words to the explication of the *laſt* Verſe of the *firſt* Chapter of the *Canticles*, where it is ſaid, *the beams of our houſe are Cedar*, he concludes that hereby are meant thoſe who are *validiores*, of greateſt ſtrength in the Church: *Et puto quod convenienter hi qui epiſcopatum bene miniſtrant in Eccleſia*, &c. *And I think that they who well diſcharge the Office of a Biſhop in the Church may conveniently be called Beams, by which the whole Building is born up*, &c. *viz.* by ſupporting and defending the Chriſtian Faith, upon which the Church is built. And thus the *Abyſſine* Chriſtians, at this day call not only S. *Mark*, but their great Doctor S. *Cyril* by the name of *Columnæ Eccleſiæ Alexandrinæ (s)*, the Pillars of the Church of *Alexandria*: becauſe *Cypril* was a mighty aſſertor and defender of the Truth, againſt the aſſaults of Hereticks. Upon which account, *Rupertus Tuitienſis (t)* calls S. *Auſtin* by the ſame name, that S. *Paul* here calls *Timothy*, *columna & firmamentum veritatis*, the *Pillar and Ground*, or ſtrong ſtay, of *Truth*. Which Language is common among the *Jews*, who call *Abraham*, for inſtance, *the Pillar of the World (u)*, with reſpect to the true Religion which he maintained: which is the very Language of *Ignatius*, concerning the Apoſtles, of whom he thus ſpeaks, οἱ σύλοι τῆς κόσμυ οἱ ἀπόσολοι *(y)*, *the Pillars of the World, the Apoſtles*; mentioning together with them, *the Spouſe of Chriſt, viz.* the Church.

* *Hom.* III. *Baſil. p.* 598.

(s) *Ludolphi Hiſtor. Æthiop. L.* III. *c.* 12. *n.* 51.

(t) *L.* VII. *oper. de Sp. Sancto, cap.* 19.

(u) *Maimon. de cultu ſtell. c.* 1. *n.* 5. *& More Nevohim, Pars* III. *c.* 29.

(y) *Epiſt. ad Philadelph.*

I have been the more copious in this, becauſe it ſhows that the ancient Doctors thought all *Biſhops* to be equally concerned in this Office, and Honour; it never entering into their minds that any one had an intereſt in it more than the reſt; much leſs that one (the Biſhop of *Rome*) had it ſolely to himſelf.

III. But

III. But further I obſerve that the *Martyrs*, though not Biſhops, are frequently called by this name. So the Churches of *Vienne* and *Lyons*, in their Letter to the Churches of *Aſia* and *Phrygia*, concerning the *bleſſed Martyrs* who had ſuffered among them, ſay that God delivered the weaker ſort, and oppoſed to the fury of the Enemy, στύλους ἑδραίους, thoſe who were *firm and ſteady Pillars, able by their Patience to draw all the violent aſſaults of the Devil upon them (x).* Among whom they mention *Sanchis* a Deacon, and *Maturus* a meer Novice, and *Attalus*, born at *Pergamus*, στύλον καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἐνταῦθα ἀεὶ γεγονότα (z): Who had always *been the Pillar and Ground* (or ſtay and ſtrength) *of Chriſtians in this place:* that is, ſettled and ſuſtained others in the Chriſtian belief. And ſo *Euſebius* ſpeaks of other Martyrs at *Alexandria* in the time of *Decius*, οἱ τερπροὶ καὶ μακάριοι στύλοι τῆς χυείας, * &c. *firm and bleſſed Pillars of the Lord, who ſtrengthned by him, and having might and power anſwerable to the ſtrength of their Faith, became admirable witneſſes of his Kingdom.* For they could not be ſhaken with the fear of death and torment; and ſo by their ſtedfaſtneſs confirmed and eſtabliſhed others in the Chriſtian Faith; and were eminent Inſtruments likewiſe of converting ſtrangers to our Religion: who ſaw their pious and meek conſtancy under the greateſt ſufferings, joyned with the greateſt charity, bowels of mercy and compaſſion, towards their bloody perſecutors. For whom they beg'd pardon and forgiveneſs of God, deſiring nothing more than they might come to that heavenly Kingdom, which they teſtified to them; by parting with life it ſelf for the ſake of it.

(x) *Apud Euſeb. L. V. Hiſtor. Eccleſ. cap. 1. p. 155. edit. Valeſ.*

(z) *Ib. p.* 157.

* *L. VI. Eccleſ. Hiſt. cap.* 41.

Neither is this meerly the *Eccleſiaſtical* Language, but the *Holy Scripture* it ſelf gives thoſe this honourable title; who conſtantly indured tribulation for the Goſpel ſake, though it did not coſt them their lives. Thus

our

our bleſſed Lord ſpeaks to the Church of *Philadelphia*, III. Revel. 12. *Him that overcometh, will I make a Pillar in the temple of my God.* Which ſignifies partly, that he ſhould be an eminent Inſtrument of upholding the Church, and preſerving many in the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, by his conſtancy and firmneſs in it: and partly, that he ſhould be ſo eſtabliſhed himſelf by the grace and power of God, that he ſhould never fall (according to that of S. *Peter*, 1 V. 10. *But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory, after that ye have ſuffered a while, make you perfect, eſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, ſettle you*): and partly, that he ſhould be made in the higheſt ſenſe, a *PILLAR*, that is, an *Apoſtolical* Man, who ſhould be advanced to the moſt eminent imployment in the Church; of teaching and inſtructing, of Governing and Ruling, as a principal Paſtor, in the Temple of God. In one word, be an *Angel of the Church*, (as he ſpeaks in the beginning of this Letter, *v.* 7. and in all the reſt) an illuſtrious Miniſter and Meſſenger of God, to publiſh the glad tidings of Salvation to the World.

Such the Apoſtles were: whom *Theodoret* calls the *Pillars of the Truth*, with peculiar reſpect to their ſufferings. *Behold*, ſaith he, † *Peter* and *John*, καὶ πύργοι τῆς εὐσεβείας, καὶ στύλοι τῆς ἀληθείας, &c. *the Towers*, or Bulwarks *of Godlineſs, the Pillars of Truth, ſupporting the Structure of the Church: being ſcourged by the Jews, but rejoycing and glorying*, (V. Act. 41.) *that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame*, or to be diſgraced, *for his Name.* And ſuch like were theſe victorious Souls, as *Arethas* * expounds our Saviour's words to this Church; *For he that conquers*, ſaith he, the adverſe powers, στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα κατάστασις τῆς ἀληθείας, *is conſtituted a Pillar and Ground of the Truth; rejoycing himſelf immutably* (ſo he interprets *in the temple of my God*) *and*

† *Orat. de providentia, Tom.* IV. *p.* 441.

* *Comment. in* III. Rev. 12.

eſtabliſhing others in goodneſs, that they may not fall from their ſtedfaſtneſs.

IV. Any eminent perſon alſo in the Church, though not a Martyr, is ſometime called by this name in Eccleſiaſtical Writers. For inſtance, *Jo. Damaſcen* thus addreſſes himſelf to *Jordanes* the *Archimandrite*, ὦ πάτερ θεῖε πάτερ, στῦλε καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, (b) *O moſt Divine Father, the Pillar and Ground*, or ſtay, *of Truth*. Nay, thus zealous perſons in the Laity, eſpecially if they were of great quality, contributed to the ſupport of the Faith, by ſupporting theſe Pillars of it. So S. *Baſil*, in one of the forenamed Epiſtles, having bewailed the baniſhment of their Biſhops, whom he calls the *Pillars and Ground of Truth*, prays *Terentius* (a Count of the Empire) to preſerve himſelf ſafe, that they might have ſome to reſt upon; *God having graciouſly made him* ἐν πᾶσιν ἡμῖν βακτηρίαν καὶ ἔρεισμα, (c) *a ſupport and a prop in all things to us.* But they of the Clergy more particularly, though of the Order below Biſhops, were lookt upon as having no ſmall ſhare in this Office. For S. *Cyril* of *Alexandria* (d) having mentioned Chriſt as the *foundation*, and believers in him, as *pretious Stones* built upon him, unto a holy Temple; compares their inſtructors in the Myſteries of Religion to *the moſt pretious Stones* (ſuch as thoſe mentioned, LIV. *Iſa.* 11, 12.) which God uſes, ſome in laying the foundation, others as buttreſſes; ſome for the Gates, others for the Walls, of the holy City, that is, the Church: that *all her Children may be taught of God.*

(b) *Epiſt. ad eun de Triſagio.*

(c) *Epiſt.* 345.

(d) *Lib.* V. *in Eſaiam, Tom.* 2. *p.* 768.

V. Nay, one of the forenamed great Doctors of the Church warrants me to add, that every pious member of the Church, in his place and calling, hath his ſhare in

in this great truſt. For whoſoever, ſaith S. *Gregory Nyſſen*, (*e*) is perfected in theſe two great Commandments, *to love God, and to love his Neighbour, he is framed to be* στύλος καὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας, *a Pillar and Ground of Truth, according to the language of the Apoſtle. By both theſe, we may become ſuch Pillars, as* Peter, *and* James, *and* John; *or if there be any other, ſince them, that hath been or ſhall be worthy of this name.* And he doth, in effect, ſay the ſame in the place before named; (*f*) where he obſerves the Apoſtle requires others to be Pillars, as well as himſelf, when he ſaith, ἑδραῖοι γίνεσθε, ἀμετακίνητοι, 1 Cor. XV. 58. *be ye ſtedfaſt* (or *ſtable*) *unmoveable, abounding always in the work of the Lord.* For he that is thus firmly *fixed and ſetled* (as the word ἑδραῖος ſignifies) and diligent in well doing, whatſoever trials he hath to ſhake him, he ſupports Religion, he maintains the credit of it in the World, he doth great ſervice to the Truth, by ſhewing how good, how uſeful, how laborious, it makes thoſe that embrace it.

(*e*) *Hom.* XIV. *in Cant. Canticorum*, p. 684.

(*f*) *De vita Moſis.*

And I am ſure it lies upon every one of us, as an indiſpenſable duty to hold faſt the Truth, and to profeſs it, and practiſe it; and, notwithſtanding any danger or trouble unto which it may expoſe us, to teſtifie unto it, if need be, by conſtant, patient, peaceable ſuffering for Chriſt's ſake. And he that doth thus, is according to his meaſure, though never ſo mean a perſon in the Church, *a Pillar and Ground of Truth.* And thus *Theodoret* expounds theſe words, he *calls* σύλλογον *the aſſembly or congregation of thoſe that believe, the Houſe of God and the Church: and theſe*, he ſaith, *are the Pillar and ſupport of Truth. For being founded upon the Rock, they both remain unſhaken, and preach by their deeds the truth of their Doctrine.* And *Theophylact* alſo, ἡ δὲ ἐκκλησία τὸ ἀληθείας σύστασις. *The Church is a conſtitution,*

or an assembly of truth: For all things that are done in it, are true, nothing shadowy, as under the Law, &c.

VI. I have but one thing further to add; That the *more* and the *better* they are, who joyn in this work, the greater support they give to the Truth.

First I say, the *more*, the greater number there are of those who maintain the truth, by preaching, writing, suffering, or well doing, and the greater credit they have in the World; the *stronger Pillars* they are, and the surer doth the truth seem to be in the eyes of those to whom they represent it. Upon which account the Doctrine of S. *Paul* and *Barnabas*, which he had received by revelation as well as other Apostles, yet being communicated to *James* and *Cephas* and *John*, who were eminent *Pillars*, and been approved by them, received the more strength by their concurrent testimony, II. *Gal.* 2, 5, 9. And it was still more confirmed by the whole Council of Apostles and Elders at *Jerusalem* (XV. *Act.* 2. 25.) so that it was received joyfully at *Antioch* (V. 31.) and the Churches in other Cities *were established in the Faith, and increased in number daily.* XVI. 4. 5. For which reason the testimony of a great assembly of Bishops, was a greater support and strengthning to the Faith, than the testimony of single persons. They were the principal Trustees, as I observed before, to whose fidelity the truth was committed: and when they met together in a Council to discharge this trust, it gave great force to the truth declared by them. Which they knew so well, that in ancient times, such Councils were wont to desire the consent of other Bishops, who were not there, for the greater establishment and confirmation of the Faith, as *Theodoret* (g) relates of the Council of *Sardica*, whose Letter he hath set down to all the Bishops in the World: desiring them, ὡς τῷ πνεύματι παρόντες, as present

(g) L. 2. *Hist. Eccles. C.* 6.

preſent in Spirit with them, to conſent to their Synod, and by their ſubſcription to decree, that concord might be preſerved, among all their fellow Biſhops every where. Nay, the great and firſt general Council of *Nice* it ſelf, (*h*) wrote to the Church of *Alexandria*, and the reſt throughout *Egypt*, *Libya*, and *Pentapolis*, to give them an account of their decrees. And *Conſtantine* alſo certified all abſent Biſhops, who could not come to the Council, of their proceedings: *That there might be one Faith* (as his words are) *and ſincere charity, and a concording Religion, or Piety, preſerved among them all.*

(*h*) *Theodoret. L. 1. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Cap. 8, 9.*

It was upon the ſame ſcore that ſometime they ſent particularly to the Biſhop of *Rome* for his concurrence (as the Council of *Carthage*, (*i*) and others did in the buſineſs of *Pelagius*) not becauſe they imagined their decrees would be of no force without his conſent (that's an ungrounded fancy) but becauſe he was an eminent Biſhop in the Church of Chriſt; by whoſe concurrent teſtimony the Truth would be ſtill more confirmed, and their Churches would have the greater comfort *de communi participatione unius gratiæ, from the common participation of one grace*: by knowing, that is, that they were of the ſame belief.

(*i*) *Auguſt. Epiſt.* XC, XCI, XCV.

The like may be ſaid of the *Martyrs*, who, when they ſuffered in great numbers, gave the more amazing teſtimony to the Truth, which terrified the Devil himſelf, and ſtaggered their very Judges: as S. *Baſil* ſpeaks (*k*) of the XL *Martyrs*, who all together, as if they had had but one Mouth, cryed out, when they were examined, *I am a Chriſtian.* By ſuch reſolution as this our Religion was not only upheld, but mightily increaſed: And the more the number of Chriſtians increaſed, the more was Truth ſpread abroad, till it grew to be the prevailing Religion; and the *Kingdoms of the*

(*k*) *Tom. 1. Hom. XX.*

the World became the Kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ.

2. But it was not mere numbers that did the busineſs; for their extraordinary Piety and Purity in thoſe early days, had the greateſt hand in it. Which was the *ſecond* thing I deſired to be noted under this laſt head, that the *better* the Paſtors and the People are, the greater ſervice they do to the Truth; and the more prevalent their teſtimony is, when it appears by their lives, that they have no other intereſt to ſerve, but that of Truth and Godlineſs.

And when all is done, it will be found that the ſanctity of thoſe who aſſert God's holy Truth, their pure and undefiled Religion which keeps them from being *ſpotted by the World*, is that which will be the moſt powerful to move Mens minds, and will make the eaſieſt way for its entertainment in Mens Hearts. Nothing can give a *Church* ſuch authority, and make its teſtimony ſo credible, as its integrity and ſincere Devotion; its ſtudy of purity in Heart and Life; its deſigning clearly the good of Souls, and not worldly advantages; its univerſal charity and kindneſs: which invites even ſtrangers to attend unto it, and much more its own Members.

And therefore I muſt note for a concluſion of this part of my Diſcourſe, that when we ſpeak of *the Church*, i. e. the whole company of believers, and ſay that it is *the Pillar and Ground or eſtabliſhment of Truth*, it is meant *principally* of thoſe, whoſe Faith brings forth fruit and works by love. Theſe are the main ſupporters of the Chriſtian Religion; who do not merely profeſs it; but are acted and live by their Faith, in all holy obedience to Chriſt. For they are *living Stones* built upon him the foundation of all; the true living *Body of Chriſt*, who are animated by his Spirit, and

and with whom he hath promiſed to *make his abode*: and conſequently are the only perſons, who to purpoſe ſupport and maintain, and defend the Truth. Which would in a little time, be ſuppreſſed or obſcured, depraved or varied, concealed or miſinterpreted; if the wicked only had the conduct of it. Who are no more to be accounted *Pillars of the Truth, i. e.* can no more alone ſupport and uphold it, than a Reed, a Straw or a rotten Stick, can ſupport a building. This is the ancient Doctrine of the Church it ſelf, as appears by what S. *Auſtin* ſaies, in his Preface to the Expoſition of the XLVIII. *Pſalm* (*k*). Where taking the *firmament*, which was made the ſecond day, to be an emblem of the *Church*, he ſaith by the *Church* we ought to underſtand *Eccleſiam Chriſti in Sanctis*, &c. *the Church of Chriſt in his Saints*; *the Church of Chriſt in thoſe whoſe names are written in Heaven, the Church of Chriſt in thoſe who do not yield to the temptations of this World. Ipſi enim digni ſunt nomine FIRMAMENTI*, for theſe are *worthy the name of Firmament*, or ſtrength. Therefore the Church of Chriſt in thoſe *qui firmi ſunt*, who *are ſtrong* (*concerning whom the Apoſtle ſpeaks, we that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak*) *is called the FIRMAMENT. For hearken and acknowledge, how this Church is called by this name in the Apoſtolical writings* (and then he quotes this place to *Timothy*) *which is the Church of the living God, columna & firmamentum veritatis, the Pillar and ſupport of Truth.*

(*k*) *Tom.* VIII. *Enarratio in* Pſal. XLVII.

By theſe principally the Truth is maintained: For it is moſt plainly delivered by the Apoſtles themſelves, that Men and Women, by their wicked lives, did turn Apoſtates from the Faith. And we find by experience, as well as their inſtructions, that nothing doth more quench the Spirit of God, nothing is more contrary to true Wiſdom, than filthineſs and impurity, which we

muſt

muſt abandon therefore, and not think we can do very conſiderable ſervice to the Truth, by the bare profeſſion of it: but upon the foundation Chriſt Jeſus, we muſt ſeriouſly indeavour to raiſe the ſuperſtructure of a holy life, whereby we ſhall adorn, recommend, and effectually promote our Religion.

It muſt not be denyed indeed, that a multitude profeſſing true Faith in Chriſt, though their lives be not ſo regular as they ought to be, are not unſerviceable to our Religion: Nay, in ſome caſes, by their ſteadineſs in the Truth, give no ſmall ſupport unto it. Eſpecially, when they likewiſe continue united together, by partaking conſtantly of the ſame Sacraments. Whereby they are joyned to thoſe who are truly good, and remain a part of the Chriſtian ſociety; till their lives be ſo bad that they are *thrown* out of the Church, as not fit to have Communion with it. And therefore out of ſuch a Church, conſiſting of thoſe that profeſs the Faith of Chriſt intirely, and worſhip him purely, without any dangerous mixtures, no Man ought to depart; merely becauſe every one therein is not knit to Chriſt by ſuch hearty love and obedience as that Faith ought to produce. For they that are only in outward Communion with ſuch a Church, are in a good way to ſomething more: and therefore ought not to be rejected, as no Chriſtians. For by external Communion, the inward lively Communion with God our Saviour, is produced, ſet forward, and promoted: and it is ſomething to own Chriſt, and acknowledge him for our Lord and Maſter; and receive conſtant inſtructions from his Miniſters, whereby we are convinced of our duty. Which though it doth not at preſent make them good and faithful Servants, yet they may be ſo in time: and the way to make them ſo, is not to leave them to themſelves, by ſeparating from them; but to admoniſh, reprove and exhort them

to

to become living Members of Christ's Body, that they may do him greater service, by recommending his Religion effectually to the World. As all those do, who separate from the wickedness of the World, though they continue mixed with the wicked that are in the Church; till they can, in an orderly manner and after regular proceedings, be thrown out of it. Whereas, on the contrary, they who upon pretence of the wicked being mixed with the godly, depart from the external Communion of the Church; have very much dishonoured Religion, and help to destroy the Church by endless separations.

For when they have so departed from the Church, they are not sure they depart from the wicked: though it be sure they have left the Communion of a great many good Men and Women, who are mingled in common, with the bad. And what advantage can such Men propound unto themselves, or unto true Religion and godliness: when they certainly forsake the society of a great many truly good Men, for an imaginary departure from the wicked? Because after all the care they can take, they cannot be sure there are no wicked among them: but they leave a Church, in which it is notorious there are a great number of holy People, and erect Congregations, for ought they can certainly know, of such as conceit themselves Religious, merely from this separation.

This is not the means therefore of upholding Truth, and of promoting godliness. But if we be seriously bent on that, the Apostle hath shown us the way in the next Epistle, 2 *Tim.* II. 19. *Let every one that names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.* Whosoever doth so, he is an excellent Servant of Jesus Christ, and of his Truth: which was promoted by nothing more, I might say by nothing so much, as by the

eminent Piety and Vertue of the first Preachers of Christianity, and of the generality of those who were called by Christ's name. Some bad people there were among them (as we learn by the Church of *Corinth*) which did not unchurch them, nor make them unfit for communion with them. *For in a great House* (as the Apostle there speaks in the next verse, 2 *Tim.* II. 20, 21.) *there are not only vessels of Gold and Silver, but also of Wood and of Earth; and some to honour, some to dishonour. But if a Man purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for his Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.* Thus the Apostle writes immediately after these words, *Let every one that names the name of Christ, depart from iniquity.* Whatsoever becomes of others, he shall become an *useful Servant* of his Master Christ, *a vessel of Honour*, or an instrument to do him honour, by being *fitted to every good work.*

There are eminent testimonies of this, not only in Christian but in Pagan Writers also, that hereby the Truth of Christ prevailed and got the upper hand in the World. For *Julian* * himself upbraids the Priests of his Religion, with the marvellous piety of the *Galilæans* (as he calls Christians) whose singular Humanity, and Charity even to Strangers, nay to Pagans, when those of their own Religion neglected them, together with the gravity of their manners and composed behaviour (though he call it feigned) had such great effect, that by this means, as he acknowledges, Christianity so increased, that its growth could no way be hindred, but by their outdoing Christians in these worthy qualities.

* *Epist.* XLIX. *ad Arsacium, & in fragm. p.* 357.

And such an eminent vertue it must be, and that alone, which can restore our Religion to its primitive lustre: Nay, that which will preserve it from being lost, where it is planted. For as fast as true piety and vertue decays,

cays, ſo faſt doth the Church go to ruin. And therefore if we have an hearty love to our own Church, and the ſaving truth of God, which is there profeſſed and aſſerted, we muſt ſtudy to uphold it by this means. Not by ſeeking for a purer Church (which is impoſſible, as to Faith and Worſhip, and Manners too, to be found) but by endeavouring to amend one another, by purifying our ſelves in the firſt place from all filthineſs both of the fleſh, and of ſpirit; and then by admoniſhing others that do not live as they ought, of the error of their ways, and calling them to Repentance.

Which courſe I wiſh all they who have ſeparated from our Communion, would conſider whether they ever took? Did they not firſt forſake us, and then ſay, before they tried, that we have people incorrigibly wicked among us? This is not the way (to ſay nothing of what ſort of people they have among themſelves) of ſaving us all from periſhing: but, as it proceeds commonly from too much pride, and conceitedneſs, and from great want of Charity; ſo it produces lamentable effects. For under a pretence of making the Church more holy, it deſtroys both holineſs and the Church: by breaking the unity of it, by diſgracing Religion, by turning it into diſputes and vain jangling, by endleſs ſeparations under the notion of greater and more refined purity; till the Church be crumbled into ſo many little bits and fractions, that little more than the name of a Church remains.

Let us therefore preſerve Union among our ſelves as much as is poſſible, that we may preſerve the Church and Truth. And then there may be the more hope of reclaiming the ungodly: who will receive an admonition or reproof far better from one of their ſociety, who calls them brethren; than from one that ſeparates from them as mere Strangers and Foreigners, with whom they have nothing to do in matters of Religion.

Would to God this were more ſeriouſly practiſed among us; that we would be as forward, charitably to reprove Men for their wickedneſs, as we are even to reproach them, perhaps uncharitably, for their falſe opinions. It might be a means of their cure, an effectual remedy for their amendment, when piouſly and prudently adminiſtred: and a means of bringing thoſe back, who are gone aſtray from us, that there *may be no diviſions among us, but we may be perfectly joyned together in the ſame mind, and in the ſame judgment.*

PART

PART III.

How the Church diſcharges this Office, of a Pillar and Ground of Truth.

WHAT the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith concerning *Jeruſalem*, or the Church of the *Jews*, which was wont there to aſſemble, is more fully verified in the Chriſtian Church: *Great and glorious things are ſpoken of thee, O thou city of God*, LXXXVII. *Pſ.* 1. This great City, S. *John* ſaw deſcending out of Heaven, *having the glory of God*, XXI. *Rev.* 10, 11. And in the Verſe before, calls this Church, *the bride, the lambs wife.* There is a ſpecial preſence, that is, of God in it; and a ſpecial love of the Lord Jeſus to it. For it is, *the body of Chriſt, and the fulneſs of him that fills all things.* To this, S. *John* ſaith, *they ſhall bring the glory and honour of the nations:* againſt this, our Saviour promiſes, *the gates of hell ſhall not prevail. The pure water of life, clear as cryſtal* runs therein: here grows the *tree of life*, (XXII. *Rev.* 1, 2.) and it is, as it were, the *paradiſe and garden of God.*

Which things ſhow what an honour, what an happineſs it is, to be a Citizen of this Holy *Jeruſalem.* Whoſoever they be, that by a cordial Faith in Chriſt, and ſincere love to him, joyn themſelves to this Body, are made Members of Chriſt, Children of God, Companions of Angels, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven. They are under the protection of the Almighty; under

under the guidance of his Holy Spirit; under the care and tender love of that great and glorious Lord, who is the *Prince of all the kings of the earth*, and hath *all power in heaven*, as well as *earth*, inveſted in him. For the Church is the *houſe and family of God*, nay the *temple of the living God*, (2 *Cor.* VI. 17.) for he hath ſaid, as it there follows, *I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people: I will be a Father unto you, and ye ſhall be my ſons and daughters, ſaith the Lord God Almighty.*

Theſe things are great indeed, and exceeding glorious.

But not content with theſe priviledges, which are as a Royal Diadem, and Crown of Glory, on the Head of the Church; there are thoſe who would adorn her with prouder Titles: and ſet her forth in an adulterous dreſs, and a preſumptuous glory; making her, in a manner, equal to her Head, the Lord Chriſt. For they have ſnatcht one of the incommunicable properties of God, and fixt it, as a Jewel, on the top of the Churches Crown: telling us that ſhe is an infallible Guide, who cannot miſlead us. That is, though ſhe may go aſtray, and play the Harlot, in life and practice, yet ſhe cannot err, nor miſtake in her judgment: So that if we liſten to what ſhe ſays, we ſhall never wander, but always be in the right.

For the proof of this, they firſt ſuppoſe themſelves to be the Church of Chriſt, and they alone: and then they abuſe this place of Holy Scripture, to aſſert this Divine Prerogative to be in his Church; that is, in themſelves. But I have expoſed the bold folly of theſe pretences, by ſhowing, that the Church here ſpoken of is the Church of *Epheſus*; and that *Timothy* was the principal *Pillar and Ground of Truth* in this Church. Which doth not ſignifie, I have ſhown, that either the *Church*, or *Timothy*, were the very Foundation of the Chriſtian Faith, upon

upon whoſe credit the Authority, the Truth, and Certainty of all Religion depends: but the Supporters of the Truth; who teſtified, maintained, upheld, and propagated the Faith of Chriſt.

For the more full underſtanding of which, I ſhall briefly ſhow (before I proceed to the *laſt* thing propounded) *firſt* what power it is that we herein aſcribe to the Church; particularly to the Biſhops and Governors thereof: *Secondly*, what power it cannot pretend unto, nor ought to be yielded to any Church, or Perſon whatſoever.

I. As for the firſt of theſe, what the power is we allow the Church, when we ſay it upholds, maintains and teſtifies to the Truth, it is as much as to enquire of what Authority the Teſtimony of the Church is, how much it ought to weigh with us, and how far we ought to yield to it: to the Teſtimony, for inſtance, of the preſent Church of which we are Members (for it hath as much Authority as any other) when it propounds Truth to us, and preſſes it upon our belief. Are we to believe it, meerly becauſe the Church ſaith it?

In anſwer to which we affirm, that the Teſtimony of the Church, is that whereby we are both *informed* of the Truth, and *induced*, as by the *firſt external* motive to Faith in Chriſt. Mr. *Hooker* calls it the *Key*, as others do the *Door*, which lets us into the knowledge of the great Myſtery of Godlineſs, which is preſerved in this Houſe of God.

If we allow it not this, we allow it nothing: nor can it, or any Perſon in it, be ſaid to be a *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, unleſs it do ſomething to the bringing us acquainted with the Truth; which it propounds and ſets before us, and teſtifies to be that which Chriſt hath left with his Church, to be delivered down to all Generations.

ons. For it conveys the Holy Scriptures to us, and calls upon us to consider and study them: that therein, by the help of the Pastors of the Church (to whom this Office, I have shown, principally belongs) we may find all necessary Truths, in order to our Salvation. Which Testimony being the Testimony of Men, that profess Faithfulness, Honesty and a good Conscience, as the great thing in their Religion, is the highest of all humane Testimonies: and cannot but work very strongly and powerfully upon Mens minds, when Christians are such as they profess to be: and as they are, it ought to work thus far upon all sorts of Men, even upon those who are out of the Church; as to incline them to have a reverend regard to that Faith and those Scriptures, and to look into them and consider them; which they see such multitudes of People, and some of them very wise, as well as devout, constantly esteem as the very Truth of God, transmitted to them from his Son, by the Apostles, who attended on him from his first appearing, till he went to Heaven.

This moved S. *Austin* when he was yet in part an Infidel, being a *Manichee*, to believe the Gospel, according to that famous Discourse of his, in answer to the Epistle of *Manichæus*, which contained in a manner the whole Belief of that party; *Ego non crederem Evangelio, nisi me Ecclesiæ Catholicæ authoritas commoveret* (*m*); which is to be thus translated, according to the Phrase of the *Africans*, *I had not believed the Gospel, unless the Authority of the Catholique Church had moved me thereunto.* For it is evident (as hath been shown by our Writers, since the beginning of the Reformation *) he speaks of himself when a *Manichee*, as the words immediately following declare, *Those whom I obeyed when they said, Believe the Gospel; why should I not obey when they say, Do not believe* Manichæus? Which doth not signifie that the credit of the Gospel, is founded upon the Churches Authority,

(*m*) *Tom.* VI. *contra Epistolam Fundamenti, Cap.* 5.

(*n*) *D. Whitaker. de sacra Script. Q.* 3. *cap.* 8.

rity, but that this was the first motive to incline him to look into the Gospel, and consider it as a Divine Book, which would inform him in the way of Salvation. Thus he explains himself in the very foregoing Chapter, where setting aside the sincere Wisdom taught in the Church, which they would not believe, he reckons up abundance of other things, which might serve to keep him in the Catholique Church, *viz. the consent of People and Nations*, &c. and then thus concludes: 'These numerous 'and great, and most dear tyes of the Christian name, may 'very well hold a Man that believes in the Catholique 'Church; *although by reason of the slowness of his under-* 'standing, *or the defects of his life, the truth do not yet* 'show it self most openly unto him. Whereas among the '*Manichees* there were none of these things to invite, 'or to hold him, but a bare promise of *Truth* wherewith 'they made a noise: which if they could have shown 'so manifestly that it could not be doubted, he confesses 'it was to be preferred before all those things, whereby 'he was held in the Catholique Church.

Which words are an evident proof that he speaks of the Authority of the Church, as only moving and inducing him to believe the Scriptures, and to joyn himself to their Society, before the TRUTH was manifested to him; which he was to find there (in the Scriptures) and which he preferred before the Authority of the Church. Which he, elsewhere, tells the *Donatists* was not to be believed upon its own credit; 'But whe- *L. de unitate Ecclesiæ, cap. 16.*
'ther they hold the Church, let them not show but from 'the Canonical Books of the Divine Scriptures: for *we* 'neither do not say that we ought to be believed, because 'we are in Christ's Church, because that Church which 'we hold was commended to us by *Optatus*, or *Ambrose*, 'or other innumerable Bishops of our Communion, or 'because it is approved by Councils, or because Mira-

'cles are every where wrought in it: *These and such 'like things, are therefore to be approved, because they are 'done in the Catholique Church: but it is not therefore ma- 'nifested to be the Catholique Church, because these things 'are done in it.* Our Lord Jesus himself, when he rose 'from the dead, and offered his Body to be toucht as 'well as seen by his Disciples, lest they should think 'there was any fallacy in it, *judged it meet rather to con- 'firm them by the testimonies of the Law, and the Prophets 'and Psalms*; showing how all things were fulfilled, 'which were predicted. And so he commanded his 'Church, saying, *that repentance and remission of sin 'should be preached in his Name, beginning at Hierusalem.* This he testified was written in the Law, the Prophets and Psalms: this we hold commended from his Mouth. *These are the Documents, these the Foundations, these the strong Grounds of our Cause.* We read in the Acts of the Apostles of some Believers, that they sought the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so. What Scriptures? but the Canonical Books of the Law and the Prophets: 'to which are added the *Gospels*, the *Apostoli- 'cal Epistles*, the *Acts of Apostles*, and the *Revelation of 'S.* John. Search all these, and bring forth something 'manifest, whereby ye may demonstrate the Church, ei- 'ther to have remained only in *Africa*, or to be to come 'out of *Africa*, &c. This is an illustrious Testimony, he thought the Church it self was to be warranted by the Scriptures, which did not therefore receive their Authority from the Church, but give it all the Authority it hath. And after all, it was not the Authority of the present Church barely that moved him when he was a *Manichee*; but of the Catholique Church from the beginning. *Occham* * thinks he speaks of the Church in the Apostles times alone, which moved him to Believe. And others (as *Gabriel Biel*) confess he speaks of the Authority

* *Fr White's* Answer to *Fisher's* second Conference, *p.* 24.

Authority of the Church, *à tempore Chriſti & Apoſtolorum*, &c. from the time of Chriſt and of the Apoſtles down to his days.

Such Authority cannot but weigh [illegible] much, even with thoſe that do not yet believe, if [illegible]eriouſly pondered: but much more with thoſe, that are already Chriſtians. Whether they be *Novices* and weaklings, who are as yet doubtful in the Faith, though in the Church: the Teſtimony and Authority of it, ought to confirm and quiet their minds (as it did S. *Auſtin*'s, it appears by the place before-named) and keep them cloſe to the Chriſtian Society, till they may themſelves come better acquainted with the Truth, and more fully underſtand the Holy Scriptures, which the Church delivers to them, and puts into their hands, as the Word of God. Or whether they be more *grown Chriſtians* (and indeed all ſorts of Perſons in the Church) who ought to be ſo far wrought upon even by its Authority, as to be perſwaded thereby to read conſtantly, to conſider and ponder ſeriouſly, and to practiſe thoſe plain Leſſons faithfully, which the Holy Scripture teaches them; till it work effectually upon their hearts, and purge them ſo throughly from all bad affections, that they may more perfectly underſtand the Truth.

Thus much is indiſputable; for God hath appointed outward means for the conveying Divine Truth, to our Belief; and this means is ordinarily the Church: to which we aſcribe theſe two great things, in this buſineſs. (p) *Firſt*, the office of a *Witneſs*, teſtifying the Authority of Holy Scripture to us: *Secondly*, of an *Inſtrument* in Gods Hand, to lead us into the underſtanding of the Scriptures, and by its Miniſtry, in preaching and expounding them, to beget a Divine Faith in us.

(p) Anſwer to Charity miſtaken, *Sect.* V.

But further than this, we cannot, we muſt not go. For the laſt reſolution of our Faith is not into the Teſtimony

of the Church, but into the Teſtimony of God himſelf, which we find recorded in the Holy Scripture, delivered by the Church unto us. Thus S. *Auſtin* moſt admirably diſcourſes in that very Book againſt *Manichæus* (*q*) his Letter, from whence the fore-named ſaying, *(I had not believed the Goſpel, unleſs the Churches Authority had moved me to it)* is wont, at every turn, to be objected to us, by thoſe of the *Romiſh* perſwaſion. *Thou doſt nothing, but praiſe what thou believeſt, and deride what I believe.* Now ſince I can be even with thee, *and do the very ſame, praiſe what I believe, and deride what thou believeſt; what is to be done? but that we leave and relinquiſh thoſe, who invite us to know things certain; and afterwards require us to believe things uncertain* (let thoſe of the *Roman* Church mark this) *and that we follow them, who invite us firſt to believe, that which we cannot yet ſee into; that being made ſtronger in the Faith it ſelf, we may come to underſtand what we believe:* NOT MEN NOW, BUT GOD HIMSELF INWARDLY ESTABLISHING AND ILLUMINATING OUR MIND.

(*q*) *Cap.* XIV. *contra Epiſt. quam vocant Fundamenti.*

It is impoſſible to read this paſſage, and not ſee that this Father thought our Faith is not ultimately reſolved into the Teſtimony of the Church: but by that, being invited to believe the Holy Scriptures, we are eſtabliſhed (upon the ſerious reading of them) in the Chriſtian Faith, and Knowledge of the Truth, by God himſelf. Upon whoſe *Word*, in the Holy Scripture, and not upon *Men*, we bottom our Faith. Upon the Teſtimony and Authority of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt: and the Teſtimony of divine Men, inſpired by them; who by Miracles, and Signs, and mighty Deeds, and a prophetical Spirit, proved themſelves to be ſent of God; and have left his Mind and Will upon Record in the Scriptures of Truth. Which the Church indeed, in all parts of the World hath kept and preſerved, and faithfully tranſmitted

tranſmitted down to us; and now propounds to our Faith: but it is not merely what the Church ſaith, that makes us believe; but what God himſelf ſaith in the Holy Scriptures, concerning his Son Jeſus Chriſt; and what Jeſus Chriſt ſaith, concerning his riſing from the Dead, and ſending the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles. Which being fulfilled, evidently proved him to be the Son of God, the Saviour of the World: and them to be his Apoſtles, and Miniſters, who declared to Men the true way of Salvation.

So the Church directs and guides us to the Scriptures of Truth; but they reſolve and aſſure our Faith, being the very Word of God. The authority of God's Church is the firſt motive, which leads us to eſteem the Scriptures: but being led thither, we find in the matter of them that which gives us full ſatisfaction, by beſtowing our pains in reading, or hearing, and conſidering the Myſteries contained therein. The Church holds out this light to us; but it is by this light that we ſee what is the mind and will of God. To this the Church points us, and bids us attend to it; for this it diſpoſes and prepares us; it leads us by the hand to this as the only ſure foundation of our Faith; (becauſe herein we find God himſelf ſpeaking to us) and moreover by the Miniſtery of the Church we are aſſiſted in underſtanding the ſence of the Holy Scriptures: but they contain in themſelves that Divine Authority and Truth, whereby we come to a certain Faith. The Church tells us ſuch and ſuch things are true; and we find them to be ſo, by examining the Scriptures. Which the *Beræans ſearched daily, whether thoſe things were ſo*, which the Apoſtles preached: *and therefore many of them believed*; not merely becauſe the Apoſtles told them they ought ſo to do, but becauſe they found what they ſaid, in the Holy Scriptures, XVII. *Act.* 11, 12.

And

And ſo far as any Church ſpeaks according to the truth contained therein, it is to be believed and followed. But if it bring no Divine word for its warrant, if it propound other Doctrines, which are not there, it hath no authority to make ſuch Doctrines, the matter of our Faith: much leſs, to ſet up its own authority above the Scriptures; as they do who ſay, The Scriptures receive their authority from the Church Which is the Doctrine of no leſs Men than *Baronius* and *Bellarmine*, to name no more.

(r) *Ad Annum* 53 *nn.* X, XI.

The former of (*r*) which argues, that becauſe we receive theſe Holy Books, to be writings of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, and not forged under their Names, upon the teſtimony of the Church; therefore all the writings of the New Teſtament, received their authority from the Churches tradition; which is *fundamentum Scripturarum*, as he ventures to ſay, the *foundation of the Scriptures*. The other (*s*) is no leſs poſitive, that if we take away the authority of the preſent Church, and the preſent Council, we call in doubt the whole Chriſtian Faith. *For the firmneſs of all ancient Councils, and of all Doctrines, depends upon the authority of the preſent Church.*

(s) *L. 2. de Sacrament. C.* 25. Tertium.

This is very preſumptuous talk: for by the Church they mean themſelves; and then by the teſtimony of the Church (that is their own teſtimony) they mean ſuch a Divine witneſs, as aſſures us by its own authority, without any other proof. Which are the great points of difference between us, in this matter. For we aſſert, *firſt*, that the office of leading Men to the Holy Scriptures, and ſo to Faith, belongs to every Church as much as to them: and, *ſecondly*, that no Church can bring People to Faith by its own teſtimony and authority, but by the Doctrine of the Holy Scriptures: nor is any Church whatſoever to be heard

heard in matters of Divine Truth, further than it can prove its Doctrines by the authority of God's Word, and teaches things agreeable thereunto.

II. Which leads to the *Second* thing; briefly to ſhew what power and authority the Church cannot pretend unto in matters of Faith.

1. And, *firſt*, it appears by what hath been ſaid, that it hath not a *Soveraign*, *Abſolute*, *Prophetical* authority, *independent* upon the Rule of the Holy Scriptures: ſo that we muſt take whatſoever it ſaith for true, without conſulting them. This is the ambitious pretence of the great Doctors of the *Roman* Church, who give the Church (meaning thereby the preſent *Roman* Church) an authority over all things, not depending on the Scriptures; but upon which the Scriptures themſelves depend: So that without the authority of this Church, all truth is doubtful. Which is a manifeſt principle of Infidelity; making all Religion ſtand to the courteſie of a company of Men, who in ſuch matters are the leaſt to be truſted of all other Chriſtians that we are acquainted withall.

2. The Church hath no authority to propound any Doctrine, as neceſſary to Salvation, which is not delivered in the Holy Scriptures; but depends ſolely on the authority of its own Tradition. This is another of their ambitious attempts, who having arrogated to themſelves alone the whole power of the Church; make that power ſo unlimited, that it can ſupply the defects of the Scripture; and make things unwritten to become matters of Faith. Which is ſuch an unbounded Prerogative, that we may have a new Faith, as often as they pleaſe to pretend a Tradition for it; though they cannot prove it. For we muſt reſt in the authority of the preſent Church which affirms it; and that againſt the very Scripture it ſelf,

ſelf, which tells us it is able *to make a Man of God perfect*; and againſt the teſtimony of the Univerſal Church, which, I have ſhown, forbids the producing of any other Faith but that which was evidently delivered by the Apoſtles there.

3. We cannot allow the Church an Infallible authority, that is, ſuch an aſſiſtance in her Doctrines and propoſals, that ſhe cannot err in any thing ſhe defines. In Controverſies indeed ariſing about matters of Faith, we own and reverence the authority of the Church (*t*); ſo as not to conteſt the publique judgement, but to prefer it before our own private conceits, in doubtful things. But as it ought to proceed in its determinations by the Rule of Gods word; So we think it poſſible it may miſtake in the application of this Rule: and therefore we do not blindly reſign our ſelves to its authority, without all regard to the Holy Scriptures; unto which the Church ought to have a reſpect in all its determinations. No, that's another proud pretence of the preſent *Roman* Church, that they cannot miſtake in their definitions: and therefore we muſt ſubmit unto them without examination. From whence this intollerable miſchief hath inſued, that it hath made them both inſenſible of their errors, and careleſs to ſeek any cure of them, nay utterly incapable of a remedy. For as one of our own Divines excellently ſpeaks (*u*) (whoſe words thoſe are) this conceit of their Infallibility is to them *both a ſufficient reaſon for that which is moſt unreaſonable; and a ſufficient anſwer to that which is moſt unanſwerable.* To this they retreat upon all occaſions, when they are not able to maintain their ground: they have no other way to defend their errors, when they are plainly ſet before their eyes, but to tell us confidently they cannot err. Which is a very ſtrange boldneſs; for we demonſtrate, in many inſtances, that they have erred; erred moſt groſly: particularly

(*t*) *Artic.* XX.

(*u*) Dr. *Potter's* Anſwer to Charity miſtaken, *Sect.* 5.

particularly in this, that they have added *new Articles* to the old Creed, to be believed under pain of Damnation; and added a *new Canon* of Scripture to the Old Teſtament, againſt the cleareſt evidence in the Records of the Univerſal Church, that the Books they have newly received, were never acknowledged for Canonical Scripture.

If by the *Church* indeed, they would underſtand, the Church truly Catholique, the whole Body of Chriſt in all times, places and ages; and if by *matters of Faith*, they would underſtand thoſe grand Articles which I have mentioned in the firſt part of this Diſcourſe; and if by being *Infallible*, they would underſtand not an abſolute impoſſibility of erring (which humane nature is not capable of) but not actual error: there are none of us make any queſtion, but the Church is Infallible. That is, the whole Church hath not erred, nor ſhall not err, in the whole Faith, or in any neceſſary part thereof: for ſuch error would cut Men off from Chriſt, the head; and ſo leave him no Church at all; which is impoſſible. It hath been the very ſcope of firſt my Diſcourſe, to ſhow that the Church hath always kept the great fundamental truths of our Religion, and not erred in them; but tranſmitted them down to us, whole and undefiled: till the Church of *Rome*, in the Council of *Trent*, corrupted the Faith, by their errors, which they have mixed with it.

For to a particular Church, ſuch as that of *Rome* is, we cannot allow this priviledge of not erring: becauſe we know they have erred, even in fundamental Truths, and thereby ceaſed to be Churches. Witneſs thoſe glorious Churches, to which Chriſt himſelf ſent his Letters, by S. *John* the Apoſtle.

Theſe Prerogatives therefore not belonging to any Church: every one muſt be content with thoſe two Offices before mentioned; which are ſufficient. *Firſt*, The Office of a *Witneſs* teſtifying the authority of the Holy Scriptures, unto its members: *Secondly*, of Gods *inſtrument*, by whoſe Miniſtry, in opening, expounding, and urging the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Ghoſt begets a divine Faith in us. And by performing theſe Offices, it ſupports, and continues, and propagates the Truth; and ſo may be called the *Pillar and Ground* thereof.

The meaning of which I ſhall now diſtinctly ſet before the Readers eyes; that I may give a ſhort account of the *fourth* and laſt thing propounded in the beginning.

IV.

How the Church may appropriate to it ſelf this Title.

1. *Firſt*, Every Church, and every perſon in it, eſpecially the Biſhops and Paſtors, are the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, *officio*, by Duty and Office: whereby they are obliged to keep, maintain and uphold the Truth. This always was, and always will be incumbent on them; which is ſufficient to fill up the ſenſe of ſuch attributes as theſe: which do not always note *performance* of Duty, but only *obligation* to it. As when our Saviour ſaith to his Diſciples, *Ye are the ſalt of the Earth*: it doth not ſignifie that they were neceſſarily ſo (for he ſuppoſes immediately the *ſalt might loſe its ſavour*) but that they ought to be ſo; and if they were not ſo, would be *good for nothing, but to be caſt out and trodden under foot.* Matth. V. 13.

2. But *Secondly*, The firſt Churches of Chriſt, in the Apoſtles times, were *actu & effectu*, actually and effectually the *Pillar of Truth:* that is, they faithfully diſcharg'd

charg'd this Office, and perform'd their Duty, conſtantly maintaining the Truth as it is in Chriſt, in its purity and ſimplicity. For the Apoſtles were a part of thoſe Churches, whom God led *into all Truth*: which they taught ſincerely and intirely while they lived; and do at this day, inſtruct us, in the Holy Scriptures, in the whole Truth, neceſſary to our Salvation.

3. But we cannot ſay the ſame of all ſucceeding Churches, that they did faithfully perform this office, though in duty they alſo were bound ſo to do. No, ſome of them were ſo far from being *Pillars of the Truth*, that they let it fall to the ground. We have ſtrange inſtances of it, with which I ſhall not fill theſe Papers, in the Hiſtory of the Church: which ſhow us that if we take not heed to our ſelves, and the Doctrine that is delivered to us, we have no ſecurity, that we, or any other particular Church, ſhall continue firm and ſtedfaſt ſupporters of the Truth. For *Pillars* themſelves may decay; and, if they be not well lookt after, will go to ruin, and fall to the Earth.

4. Even this very Church of *Epheſus*, which was a *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, while *Timothy* preſided in it, afterward began, before all the Apoſtles were dead, to remit its *firſt love* and zeal for the Truth (II. *Rev.* 4.) and now is utterly ſubverted and not to be found. Which is a demonſtration the Apoſtle did not in theſe words, intend to teach that the Church cannot err, but that (as I ſaid) it is in duty bound, by its calling and Office, to preſerve the Truth pure and intire. For he himſelf foreſaw this Church would be haunted with *grievous Wolves*, after his departure (*Act.* XX. 29, 30.) who no doubt came in Sheeps clothing: as they alſo among themſelves did, who he foretold would ariſe *ſpeaking perverſe things to draw Diſciples after them.* And immediately after he had here called the Church or *Ti-*

mothy, the *Pillar of Truth*; he admoniſhes him (in the beginning of the next Chapter, IV. 1, 2.) that there would be an *apoſtaſie from the Faith*, as the *Spirit expreſly declared*. For according to what our Saviour predicted, there was ſcarce any Church, but the Enemy ſowed Tares among the Wheat: which very much hindred the growth thereof. So we are informed by *Hegiſippus*, a very ancient Chriſtian Hiſtorian; who † ſaith that as ſoon as the ſacred Quire of Apoſtles were dead, and that Generation was gone, who had heard the inſpired Wiſdom with their own ears, then begun ἡ συστασις τῆς ἀθέου πλάνης, *a Conſpiracy* or Combination of *impious or atheiſtical error*, by the deceit of falſe teachers; who make a bare-fac't oppoſition to the Truth of the Goſpel.

† *Euſeb. L. III. Eccleſ. Hiſt. c. 32.*

And yet for all this, the ſpeech of the Apoſtle is proper enough: For a Church or its Paſtor may be the *Pillar of Truth*, in regard of their duty, as I have often ſaid, though they prove negligent in their Office. Juſt as the *Prieſt* among the *Jews* was called, *the meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts*, whoſe *lips ſhould ſo preſerve knowledge*, that the people *ſhould ſeek the Law at his mouth*; becauſe this was the end of his Office, for which he was ordained: though at the ſame time, the Prophet complains, that *they were departed out of the way, and cauſed many to ſtumble at the Law: and had corrupted the Covenant of Levi*, Mal. II. 7, 8. The like we read in other places of the holy Book, that the Prophets were not true to their truſt, but declared the viſions of their own heart, not the Word of the Lord: and lead the people into error and falſhood; feeding them with lies, inſtead of Truth.

5. Further I muſt obſerve, that there is no promiſe made to any particular Church, that it ſhall always be a Pillar of Truth: no not to the Church of *Rome*, which now

now ſo boldly lays claim, and that ſolely, to this priviledge. But quite contrary there is a terrible threatning to this very Church, included in that admonition which this very Apoſtle gives them. Which is ſufficient to ſhow that Chriſt gave no ſuch priviledge to this Church, as that it ſhould never err: but directly contrary, ſuppoſed it might err, and err even to Apoſtaſie; when he bids them take heed leſt they were cut off by unbelief, as the *Jews* were, from the fellowſhip of the Saints. Read XI. *Rom.* 20, 21, 22. *They* (ſpeaking of the *Jews*) *were broken off by unbelief: and thou* (ſpeaking to the *Roman* Chriſtians) *ſtandeſt by faith. Be not high minded, but fear.* (hearken to this, O ye of the preſent *Roman* Church). *For if God ſpared not the natural branches, take heed leſt he alſo ſpare not thee. Behold the goodneſs and ſeverity of God: on them which fell, ſeverity; but towards thee, goodneſs, if thou continue in his goodneſs: OTHERWISE THOU ALSO SHALT BE CUT OF.*

From whence we may thus argue; if God had granted to the *Roman* Church, the priviledge of being a Pillar of Truth, infallibly and immutably, unto all Generations; all theſe ſuppoſitions were vain, and theſe exhortations utterly needleſs and frivolous: for it would have been abſolutely impoſſible, it ſhould be cut off, and abſolutely neceſſary it ſhould continue. And yet the Apoſtle plainly ſuppoſes otherwiſe, and took it for granted it might fail. For theſe two are directly oppoſite, to *ſtand* and to *fall*; to *continue*, and to be *cut off*; to be an Everlaſting *Pillar*, and to be *broken off*. For it is proper to a Pillar to ſtand and ſupport: but to be cut off, (as he ſuppoſes they might be) is to fall to the Ground, and not to be able to ſupport ones ſelf, much leſs others.

Now

Now that they of that Church have gone far towards this condition (according to the Apoſtles ſuppoſition) by falſifying the Truth of Chriſt, even part of the Apoſtolical Faith (and ſo have not continued a firm and ſtedfaſt Pillar of Truth, but maintained and ſupported dangerous Errors and Hereſies) is apparent from this alone, if there were no more: that they limit and confine the Catholique Church to themſelves alone; and exclude all other Chriſtians from it, who will not ſubmit to their Biſhop and Decrees. The Impiety of which is ſo great, that it is not eaſie to be expreſſed: for it is in Truth, to make the Church not *Catholique* but Particular. How new, falſe, ſacrilegious, ſcandalous, ſchiſmatical and heretical, this one Article of the *Roman Creed* is; one of our own (*x*) Biſhops hath demonſtrated evidently in a Book on purpoſe (to which I refer the Reader) which he had reaſon to call the GRAND IMPOSTURE.

(*x*) Biſhop *Morton.*

It would inlarge this Treatiſe too much beyond my intention, or elſe it would be eaſie to ſhow, both when they began to let Truth fall to the Ground, and how they proceeded to fail in their duty, and to betray their truſt; till they quite altered the ancient Catholique Faith, in the *Council of Trent*. Which now they cry up as the great *Pillar of Truth:* when it did nothing but lend a lame ſupport to the moſt notorious falſhoods; which it eſtabliſhed as *Doctrines of Faith*, when they were before but *erroneous Opinions* in that Church. I call it *lame*, becauſe of the numerous flaws that there were, both in the conſtitution, and in the proceedings of that Council; which make it of no Authority. For in the very beginning of it (*y*), they decreed that *no Man ſhould wreſt the Scripture, to a ſenſe contrary to that which the holy mother-Church* (*i. e.* themſelves) *hath held and holds.* And ſo eſtabliſhed all the Tenents of that Church, before

(*y*) *Seſſ.* IV.

fore they examined them by the Scripture: and engaged themſelves to contradict their own Decree, by wreſting the Scriptures to their own ſenſe, for the maintenance of what their Church then held. All the Biſhops likewiſe, there aſſembled, were ſworn to ſupport the *Papacy of the* Roman *Church, and the Rules of the holy Fathers:* whereby they were obliged to maintain the Uſurpations of that See upon all the Biſhops in the World; (whoſe Authority was thrown down, and thereby *the Pillars of the Truth* (as I have ſhewn them to be) trampled under foot, when *Boniface* was declared Univerſal Biſhop) and upon Kings and Princes, whom *Hildebrand* trod under foot: yea upon the whole Church; over which Pope *Leo* exalted himſelf, when he got it declared in the *Lateran* Council, that he was above a General Council, and the Univerſal Church (*z*): being blaſphemouſly called, by his flatterers, the *Spouſe of the Church*, the *Lyon of the Tribe of* Judah. From which very Phraſe of *Spouſe*, no leſs Man than *Bellarmine* (*a*) himſelf labours to prove the Pope to be *abſolutely above the Univerſal Church, and above a General Council:* becauſe it is contrary to the Apoſtle, and to the order of Nature, that the *Wife ſhould be above the Husband.*

(*z*) *Seſſ.* XI.

(*a*) *L.* II. *de Concil. Auctor. c.* 17.

This is ſufficient to ſhow what we ought to think of the preſent *Roman Church*; which is ſo far from being Infallible, that it hath erred more than any other Church.

6. But though there be no promiſe either to that or any other particular Church, of being preſerved from Error, yet the Univerſal Church, in ſome part or other of it, we are ſure will always be *a Pillar and Ground* of the whole Truth, neceſſary to Salvation: becauſe our Saviour hath promiſed the *gates of hell ſhall not prevail againſt it.* That is, the Church ſhall be perpetual: which it cannot be, unleſs it hold the Truth intirely

whereby

whereby it is joyned to Christ its Head. And thus one of their own Cardinals *(b)* understood the Infallibility of the Church, with which they now make so much noise. When we say, '*The Church cannot err in Faith or Manners*, it must be thus taken, according to the Doctrine of the Fathers; *that God doth so assist his Church to the end of the World, that the true Faith shall never fail out of the same.* For to the World's end, there shall be no time, wherein *some, though all,* shall not have true Faith working by Love. Unto this exposition we heartily submit: but that the present Church of *Rome*, or indeed any other particular Church, cannot degenerate, and depart from the right Faith, we can by no means allow; but think our selves bound by the most sacred tyes, to oppose these arrogant pretences, *that the Church is Infallible, and that they are the Church.* They are no more the Church, than any other company of Men, professing the Christian Faith: nor so much neither, for there are truer Believers than they. I have proved also that other Churches have erred, and therefore so may they: nay, *they* have erred, and that so grosly, as to be able by no other means to maintain their errors, but by pretending they cannot err.

(b) *Turrecremata Sten. de Eccles. L. II. c. 91. & L. III. c. 60.*

And therefore let no Man be so forgetful of these things as to trust them to be his Guides; fancying they cannot mislead him. They have misled those that rely upon them; and have led them into a *maze*, or *labyrinth*, in which it is impossible for them to find their way, and know what is the Truth. For if we should grant them their Church cannot err, they are not agreed, nor ever will, what they mean by the Church. Whether the *whole body* of Christian People (which is the new Heresie among them, as some of themselves call it) or a *General Council*, (which the learnedst and best Men among them maintain) or the *Pope:* who hath a great

great many on his ſide; but they cannot agree, about the *manner* of his definition (whether alone, or in a General Council), nor about the *time* (whether at any time, or only when he reſolves to publiſh Doctrines, as matter of Faith), nor about the *matter* (whether all things, even matters of *fact*, or only matters of *Faith*); and after all, no body can tell, when there is a *true Pope*. So that all their Faith falls to the Ground, and they cannot be certain of any thing they believe; becauſe they cannot be certain of the very Ground and Foundation of their Faith: which is their Church.

Theſe things I have only briefly toucht (which are more largely handled in other Books) that the Readers may be ſenſible how happy they are who are freed from theſe Impoſtures. And that our People may know their duty, in this Church of *England*, whereof by the Grace of God they are Members; I ſhall conclude this Treatiſe with *Six* Conſiderations more: whereby the whole, I hope, will be made more uſeful.

I. *Firſt*, I deſire every one, to conſider, from what I have ſaid, that this Church, in which we are, is certainly as much a *Pillar and Ground of Truth*, as any other: nay, more than many other Churches. For we openly profeſs and recite twice a day in our own Language, that every one may underſtand it, the whole Chriſtian Faith, compriſed in the *Apoſtles* Creed: with the explication of ſome part of this Faith, by the *Nicene* Fathers, once every week or more: and a more diſtinct Explication of the ſame Articles, by *Athanaſius*, once a month. That is, we hold, and aſſert, and maintain, all thoſe things which have always been, and are confeſſed by all Chriſtians: *the True, Ancient, Catholique and Apoſtolique Faith*; and the Holy Scriptures, wherein this Faith is Originally contained. And if

we knew any thing elſe to be the mind of God, delivered to us from Chriſt and his Apoſtles, by the Univerſal Church, we are prepared to receive it; and, did it appear, would immediately embrace and propagate it. But the *Univerſal Church*, as I have ſhown, hath declared this to be ſufficient, nay *full and perfect:* and moreover, forbidden any other Faith to be either compoſed, or offered, to thoſe who would become Chriſtians. To all which (that I have ſaid in the *Firſt* Part) this memorable ſaying of Pope *Leo* (*c*) the Great may be added: *The ſhort and perfect Confeſſion of the Catholique Symbol* (or Creed) *it ſelf, which is ſealed in as many ſentences, as there were Apoſtles,* (*i. e.* XII. Articles) *is ſo inſtructed with Cœleſtial munition* (or defence) *that all the opinions of Hereticks, with this Sword alone, may be cut in pieces.*

(*c*) *Epiſt. ad. Pulcheriam Auguſtam.*

II. And therefore, *Secondly*, every one of us is bound, unleſs we will betray our truſt, and as we will anſwer it to our Lord Chriſt, the Author of our Faith, to hold faſt this Faith, to preſerve it intire, and to defend it: not ſuffering any of it to be loſt, or any addition to be made to it, as if this were not ſufficient to Salvation. *Take faſt hold of inſtruction,* (of thoſe great ſubſtantial, unqueſtionable Truths, mentioned in the beginning) *let them not go, keep them, for they are your life:* as *Solomon* ſpeaks of Wiſdom, IV. *Prov.* 13. They are the Wiſdom of God our Saviour; *the Rule which the Apoſtles preached equally among all Nations* (as *Venantius Fortunatus* (*d*) ſpeaks) *the comprehenſion, and perfection of our Faith* (as S. *Auſtin* (*e*), or an Ancient Author under his name) *the Teſt* (as I have ſhown) *and Mark,* whereby the Faithful are diſtinguiſht from Unbelievers and Hereticks. And having this *Note* of a Chriſtian; you ought neither to ſeek for, nor to admit of

(*d*) *Præfat. in Symbol.*
(*e*) *Serm.* CXV *de Temp.*

of any other: being indued with this Wiſdom, you ought to think your ſelves *wiſe unto Salvation.* And not be in the leaſt moved with the bugbear name of *Hereticks*, or the empty noiſe of *Damnation*, which they of the Church of *Rome* thunder out againſt you. For they ſignifie nothing but the wrath of thoſe, who would drive you into the belief of that, by frights and terrors; into which they cannot draw you by ſolid proofs and arguments. Turn away your Ears both from the one and the other: for as the former is an inſignificant ſound, ſo the latter (all their Arguments) are but confident Sophiſtry. Which hath been, and is at this day, ſo evidently demonſtrated by our Writers: that they can have no excuſe who are deceived by them.

III. And thus every one is bound to teach his Children diligently; inſtructing and confirming them in theſe main Points of Chriſtianity: that ſo the Truth may live, when we are gone.

Conſider, I beſeech you, what a neceſſary duty this is. How ſhould the Truth be preſerved and ſupported, but by thoſe that believe it? And how ſhould they believe it, who do not underſtand it? And how ſhould they underſtand it, unleſs they be taught and inſtructed in it? And who ſo much concerned to inſtruct their Children, as they that brought them into the World? Their God-fathers and God-mothers indeed are engaged to ſee this done; but their Parents have a further, even a natural obligation to it. And therefore ought firſt of all diligently to inform themſelves; and by attending to all the means of inſtruction, which they have in this Church, to increaſe in true Chriſtian knowledge: that they may be able to teach thoſe who are committed to their care, and prepare them to be cate-

chiſed and further inſtructed by thoſe whom God hath ſet over them.

We are not Pillars and ſupporters of the Truth, but the betrayers of it; if we take no care about this. Which is one great reaſon why ſome have eaſily forſaken the true Religion here taught and profeſſed, and condemned this Church (an horrid crime, if you ſeriouſly weigh the conſequents of it) by renouncing Communion with it, as no part of the Body of Chriſt. Men may be ſoon perſwaded, by confident talkers, to part with that, which they do not underſtand: eſpecially if they apprehend any danger in keeping it, or hope to gain by letting it go. Why ſhould they hazzard the leaſt hair of their Head, for they know not what? Nay, why ſhould they be at all concerned for it, any more than a Man is for the ſeed that is ſcattered in the High-way, from which he expects no Crop? To that, you know, our bleſſed Lord compared him that *heareth the word of the Kingdom, and underſtandeth it not: for then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was ſown in his heart*, Matth. XIII. 19.

IV. You muſt endeavour therefore to profit by all ſuch inſtructions as theſe: and to grow in the knowledge of the *Holy Scriptures*; where God hath revealed his whole mind and will to you, and plainly publiſhed all thoſe Truths, which belong to the *great myſtery of godlineſs*. You ought, for inſtance, to take heed, how you wantonly and looſely interpret, or apply them, according to your own ſudden or careleſs fancies (that's a great profanation of the Sacred Books) and yet you muſt not, for fear of this, be perſwaded to throw them out of your hands; but rather with the more ſolemn, humble and reverend awe of God, upon your Souls, ponder and weigh what you read therein: eſpecially

thoſe

thoſe things which are plain and evident to every underſtanding, that by the help of them, and of thoſe whom God hath ſet over you to guide and direct your minds; you may either inform your underſtanding in what appears to have difficulty in it, or ſatisfie your ſelves that it is not neceſſary you ſhould underſtand it.

For they that would drive you from this hold of the Holy Scriptures, intend to deceive you; and would have you depend on that which is far more uncertain, than the meaning of any place of Scripture can be. There is no firm ground for us to ſtand upon, but only this: which all acknowledge is the very word of God, and delivers that, which hath been ever accounted the ſubſtance of Chriſtian Doctrines; in ſuch words as every one may underſtand them.

And therefore this is, as I have ſaid, the very foundation upon which the Church is built. Which is the *Pillar of Truth*, as it defends the Truth out of the Scriptures, and by the Scriptures, againſt all Hereticks and other oppoſers: and as it eſtabliſhes and ſupports it, in the hearts of Men, by this means, that it may be continued to Poſterity. This muſt be added, for the explication of all that hath been ſaid; that the Church, and every perſon in it, great or ſmall, are *Pillars* not by themſelves, but by the Holy Scriptures. For we know thoſe things that belong to our Salvation (as *Irenæus* (g) begins his *Third Book*) by no other perſons, than thoſe by whom the Goſpel came to us: *which then truly they preached, but afterwards, by the will of God deliverd to us in the Scriptures*, fundamentum & Columnam fidei noſtræ futurum, *to be the FOUNDATION and PILLAR of our Faith.* Upon theſe our Faith reſts and relys: ſo that they who take the Scriptures from you, take away the *Foundation and Pillar* of that Truth, which

(g) *Adv. Hereſes* L. III. C. 1.

which is or ought to be taught in the Church, and that alone. They contain the mind and will of our Lord Christ: who himself being the first Foundation, and chief Pillar of all, *Epiphanius* (*h*) applies these words to him. When he saith our Lord is called *the door*, because by him we enter in; and *the way*, because by him we walk; and the Pillar, because αὐτός ἐστιν ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας (the very words of S. *Paul* in this place) the *ground*, or settlement and stay *of Truth*. And in like manner S. *Cyril* (*i*) of *Alexandria*, saith the Pillar of a Cloud, and the Pillar of Fire, each of them represented Christ, because first of all, σύλον ἐστὶ ἑδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας ἐστιν, he is the *Pillar and Ground of Truth*; and then because he cannot be shaken or disturbed, *&c.* which he repeats again upon another occasion, speaking of the pillars which supported the Curtains of the Tabernacle; *Christ is to be understood*, saith he, (*k*) in each Pillar, τὸ τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἔρεισμα τὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ἑδραίωμα, &c. *the prop of the Church, the Ground of Truth, according to the words of Paul.* And in the next Book (*l*) speaking of the four pillars which supported the Vail before the holy place; he saith that Vail was a figure of Christ, who was lifted up on high by the preaching of the Evangelists: and therefore he saith, the four Evangelists were typified by those four pillars: being equally *eminent and pretious*, more valuable than Gold and Silver.

(*h*) *Hæres.* LXIX. *Num.* 35.

(*i*) *L.* III. *de Adorat. in Sp. & Verit. att.*

(*k*) *Ib. Lib.* IX.

(*l*) *L.* X.

Which shows that the Ancient Christians lookt upon the Church as *the Pillar and Ground of Truth*, no other ways, but as it professes, preaches, establishes, and keeps up, the Doctrine of *Christ* and of his Apostles, recorded in the *Holy Scriptures:* unto all which they indifferently apply these words of S. *Paul*, which are thought immediately to speak of the Church; which supports the Truth delivered in the Holy Scriptures, from Christ and from his Apostles.

Upon

Upon which account the *Creed* alſo, which is a comprehenſive breviary of the great Scripture Doctrines, is wont to have the ſame attribute given to it. Particularly by *Epiphanius*, (*m*) who calls it, τὸ ἔρεισμα ἡ ἀληθείας, *the Pillar* (as the Greek word ſignifies in good Authors) *or prop of Truth*, &c. *our life, our hope, and the aſſurance of immortality.* And by S. *Auſtin* (*n*), who tells the *Catechumens* in his Expoſition of the Creed to them, that it is *fidei Catholicæ fundamentum*, &c. the *Foundation of the Catholique Faith, upon which the edifice of the Church aroſe, built by the hands of the Apoſtles and Prophets.* Which hath made ſome learned Men (*o*) refer theſe words of S. *Paul* not to what goes before, but to the words following: making a full ſtop at *God*; and then beginning a new ſentence, in this manner. *The Pillar and Ground of the Truth, and without Controverſie great is the myſtery of godlineſs*, &c. which reading is countenanced by a Greek Edition of the New Teſtament at *Baſil* 1540. where the words are ſo pointed; as if the ſence were this. *God incarnate, and the great Truths depending thereupon; ought to be the very Foundation of the Doctrine thou preacheſt.* The Doctrines of the Creed, that is, are the very *Foundation and Pillars* of the Chriſtian Faith: as the *Jews*, it is known call, the great principles of their Religion, *the Foundation of the Foundation, the Pillar of Wiſdom*, as *Maimon* ſpeaks when he treats of this matter.

(*m*) *In Expoſit. fidei Catholi. n.* 19.

(*n*) *De Symbolo ad Catechum. L.* III. *C.* 1.

(*o*) *Jo. Camer. Jac. Capellus.*

Stick cloſe therefore to the Holy Scriptures, and to theſe Articles of the Faith in the Apoſtles Creed, which are the *fundamental truths* of Chriſtianity (it appears by what I have now ſaid) by which the Church maintains and defends the Truth, and the Truth upholds the Church, and we defend both.

Hold

Hold this faſt, as the ground of all; and likewiſe lay up the word of God in your heart, that it may ſetle there, and take root, and bring forth fruit unto Holineſs, that your end may be everlaſting Life.

Make the Holy Scriptures your Rule, and truſt to them, according to what the Son of *Sirach* ſaith of its ancient Books, *Eccluſ.* XXXIII. 3. *A Man of underſtanding truſts in the Law; and the Law is faithful to him as an Oracle*, or, *as the asking of Urim.* That is, here he may enquire, and have a certain anſwer which will not deceive him.

Show your ſelves ſuch Men of underſtanding, as to enquire no where elſe. And if any Church or Perſon would have you enquire of them only; take that for an undoubted proof, they are not to be truſted. If they would not guide you by the Holy Scriptures, (that is, by Chriſt, *the way*, as you have ſeen, who hath ſhown us, no where elſe that we know of, what we ought to believe) if they would have you follow their ungrounded Traditions, whereby they would inlarge your *Creed*, beyond the ancient bounds: know that you ought not to follow them, nor be led by them. For ſuch may ſoon ceaſe to be the pillars and ſupporters of the Truth; becauſe they leave that whereby they ſhould ſupport it, and place themſelves (whom they call the Church) in the ſtead of it.

An evident ſign they are not what they pretend: for the Church it ſelf ought to be demonſtrated by the Scriptures. So S. *Auſtin* (*p*) tells the *Donatiſts* in thoſe known words, which are worthy to be preſerved in remembrance. *Setting aſide all ſuch things as theſe* (which he had ſaid they could likewiſe alledge) *let them demonſtrate their Church if they can, not in the diſcourſes and rumours of the* Africans, *not in the Councils of their Biſhops, not in the Letters of any diſputers whatſoever, not in*

(*p*) *L. de Unitate Eccleſiæ, cap.* XVI.

in ſigns and fallacious wonders (for we are prepared and rendred cautious againſt theſe by the word of the Lord) but in the preſcript of the Law, in the predictions of the Prophets, in the Songs of the Pſalms, in the words of the SHEPHERD himſelf, (i. e. Chriſt) *in the preachings and labours of the Evangeliſts; that is in all the Canonical authorities of the holy Books. Let this be done ſo, as not to gather and relate thoſe things, which are obſcurely, or ambiguouſly, or figuratively ſpoken there; which every one may interpret, as he pleaſes, according to his own ſenſe. For ſuch things cannot be rightly underſtood and expounded; unleſs thoſe things which are moſt clearly ſpoken, be firſt held by a firm Faith.*

This is the very ſenſe of the Church of *England*; which teaches all her members, firſt *to hold by a firm Faith* thoſe things which are clearly revealed in the Holy Scriptures; and by them to *underſtand and expound* thoſe things that are more obſcurely delivered: believing nothing to be neceſſary *which is not read therein*, nor *may be proved thereby*: nor receiving the Doctrines and Decrees of any Church, *unleſs it may be declared that they be taken from thence.* For *hæc ſunt cauſæ noſtræ documenta, hæc fundamenta, hæc firmamenta* (as he there ſpeaks, you heard before) *These are the proofs of our Cauſe, theſe are its foundations, theſe are its ſupports.* And therefore, as he alſo ſpeaks in another Chapter of the ſame Book (*q*), which he begins thus. *Let us not hear ſuch ſpeeches as theſe, Theſe things ſay I, Thoſe things ſayeſt thou: but let us hear, Theſe things ſaith the LORD. Theſe are certainly Books of the Lord, to whoſe authority we both conſent, we both believe, we both obey. There let us ſeek the Church, there let us diſcuſs our Cauſe.* And let us not ſo much as think of looking after any other Articles of Faith, but thoſe which were from the beginning,

(q) *Cap.* III. *de Unitate Eccleſiæ.*

which our Church firmly believes, in the *three* Creeds, *Nice-Creed*, *Athanasius*, and that commonly called the *Apostles* (r) because *they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.* For *after the Faith confessed and sworn in Baptism* (as S. *Hilary* (s) speaks) *we ought not quicquam aliud vel ambigere, vel innovare, either to doubt or innovate any other thing.* It is absurd, that is, to doubt whether this be sufficient; or to add any other to it, as if this were not enough. So he interprets it a little after. *Faith is still inquired after, as if there were no Faith already: Faith is to be written, as if it were not in the heart: being regenerated by Faith, we are now taught what to believe, as if that Regeneration were without Faith. We learn Christ after Baptism; as if there could be any Baptism, without the Faith of Christ. It is most safe for us* (as it follows a little after) *to retain that first and only Evangelical Faith, confessed and understood in Baptism.*

(r) *Article* VIII.

(s) *Ad Constantium August.*

V. And that a good and righteous cause may have good defenders and supporters; let us read the Holy Scriptures wherein this Faith is contained chiefly for this end, that we may *order our steps*, that is, our Lives and Conversation, according to the rule of God's word. Let us always remember, that our Religion is *a mystery of godliness*, as was shown before; in which we are not well instructed, if it do not teach us, to *deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously and godly in the World.* Which is the best way also to *continue in the Faith*, τεθεμελιωμένοι καὶ ἑδραῖοι (as the Apostle speaks, most agreeable to these words, which he writes to *Timothy*) *grounded and setled*, or stable and stedfast. *Colos.* I. 23. For *they are the good ground*, in the Church, *who in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and*

and bring forth fruit with patience. Luk. VIII. 15. As much as to ſay; if we would ſtand faſt in the Faith, and not *fall away* (as our Saviour ſaith, others would do in *time of trial, v.* 13.) we muſt, *firſt,* come to hear and read the word of God, with unprejudiced minds and upright hearts; deſiring to know the Truth, and reſolved to receive it, though never ſo contrary to our preſent inclinations and intereſts.

This is the honeſt and good heart, which (*ſecondly*) muſt keep and preſerve in mind and heart, what it hath thus received: and not preſently let it ſlip, or lay it aſide, as a thing never to be thought of more, after we have heard it. And (laſtly) we muſt, not only in a warm fit of zeal begin to put in practice what we learn, but, bring forth fruit with *patience* or continuance.

This is the way both to draw others into the Church, and to continue our ſelves in it, and to make us conſtant defenders of the Chriſtian Faith: That is, to do our part in this great Office, of being the *Pillar and Ground of Truth.* Which is a thing incumbent upon the whole Church, and conſequently upon every one of us, who are members of it. And therefore remember, that the Chriſtian Religion, for which we are to be Zealous, is the *acknowledgement of the Truth after godlineſs,* as I ſaid before, *Tit.* I. 1. It is the Doctrine of piety; to the ſtudy of which if we ſeriouſly and heartily apply our ſelves, it will be our beſt ſecurity againſt all impoſtures: and preſerve us from the ſubtil and crafty inſinuations of thoſe who corrupt or pervert the Chriſtian Doctrine: and finally be the moſt powerful means to make Chriſtianity prevail in the World.

Remember the advice of S. *Paul* to this Church of *Epheſus*, *Epheſ.* IV. 14. 15. where you may find the true way to continue firm and ſtedfaſt, and not to be toſſed about, as Children, with every blaſt of Doctrine, *&c.* and that is ἀληθεύοντες ἐν ἀγάπῃ, by *ſpeaking*, or rather following *the Truth in love*: or (according to the *Hebrew* Dialect) *being fixed and eſtabliſhed*, in the love of God and of one another. For the *Hebrew* word *Aman* (to which ἀληθεύω anſwers) ſignifies not only to *ſpeak Truth*, but likewiſe, to be *firm and conſtant*, *fixed and eſtabliſhed*: which if we be, we ſhall have a ſettled, unmoveable confidence of God's Love and Favour towards us. For he that heartily loves God and his Neighbour, will never be ſtartled, much leſs ſhaken, by their bold *Anathemas*, though all the World ſhould tell him, he ſhall be damned, if he do not believe this or that propoſition which they ſay is abſolutely neceſſary to his Salvation: becauſe there is ſomething within him that gives them the lye, and aſſures him there is no truth in them, who ſay that God hates and will reject him, who believes all the ancient Faith, which *works by Love*. God himſelf teſtifies the contrary, by making the Truth efficacious in his heart, to purge him from all filthineſs both of Fleſh and Spirit: and by changing him into his own likeneſs, in Holineſs, Love, and Goodneſs. And the more thoroughly any Man is renewed in the ſpirit of his mind; the more perfectly will he be aſſured, that they pronounce a falſe judgment upon him: and conſequently be the more heartily reſolved againſt that Religion, which makes men ſo liberal in pouring out Curſes upon all them that do not embrace its novel opinions.

Which brings me to the laſt thing I would have conſidered, that,

V. I. We

VI. We do not perform our duty, (I may ſafely affirm, nay, confidently aver) we are not **the *Pillar and Stay of Truth***, as we ought to be; unleſs every one of us in our ſeveral Places and Stations, oppoſe, with a becoming Zeal, the Errors, Innovations, and Incroachments of the Church of *Rome:* who are the Men that are, of all other, moſt guilty of the, juſt-now named, Uncharitableneſs, or rather Pride and Cruelty. For they utterly un-Church us; and, as much as in them lies, cut us off from the Body of Chriſt; and bar the Gates of the Kingdom of Heaven againſt us. By this alone, if there were nothing elſe, we are ſure they have groſly erred, and live in error; that they deny us to be a part of Chriſt's Church: who believe and confeſs with Heart and Mouth the whole Catholique Faith; every thing that is ὁμολογούμενον, confeſſedly, and by Univerſal conſent, the Ancient Chriſtian Belief; in which the Apoſtles and Martyrs died, by which alone Righteous Souls, for many Ages, went to Heaven; knowing nothing of the *Pope's Supremacy*, of *Tranſubſtantiation*, of the *Propitiatory Sacrifice of the Maſs for quick and dead*, and the reſt of their new inventions.

We deſerve not the name of Chriſtians, no nor of Men, if we ſtand not up reſolutely, againſt ſuch uſurpations and corruptions of the Chriſtian Doctrine, and maintain that Faith, which we profeſs and wherein we ſtand, to be *the true Grace of God*; *the Faith once delivered to the Saints.* Which is incumbent chiefly upon the Biſhops and Paſtors of the Church, who, I have ſhown, are the *Principal Pillars of the Truth*, (as *Timothy* was in the Church of *Epheſus*) and therefore ought to appear, with all their might, for the ſupport of God's true Religion here eſtabliſhed: inſtructing,

cting, teaching, exhorting, all committed to their charge to be ſtedfaſt and immoveable in it to the death. And every honeſt hearted Chriſtian ought to do the ſame, in his rank and condition, by following thoſe inſtructions, by fortifying himſelf againſt *Romiſh* deluſions; by indeavouring to underſtand the Truth, and to detect their Errors.

Which are the more earneſtly to be oppoſed, becauſe the new Articles of their Creed, are not a Myſtery of Godlineſs; but tend, many of them, to nurſe Men up ſecurely in their ſins: ſuch as the Doctrines of *Purgatory*, of *Indulgences*, of *Penances*, and (to name no more) of *Infallibility*: which being preſumed, as an *unqueſtionable Principle*, is apt to lead Men in the moſt dangerous errors, and the fouleſt ſins, without any remedy or poſſibility of recovery, whenſoever the Infallible Guide ſhall propound them.

This pernicious Doctrine, I may add, ſeems alſo to be deeply rooted in all their minds; that an *Orthodox Belief will ſave them*. For this they make the great buſineſs of Chriſtianity, to bring Men, as they think, to ſuch a Faith: as appears by this, that let Men be never ſo bad, their labour is not beſtowed to make them quit their Sins, but to bring them to their Belief; where, for any thing I can ſee or hear, they may quietly enjoy them. Nay, there are a number of little devices, to put them in hope of Heaven, without reforming their lives; provided they Believe as the Church Believes.

And in this let me beſeech all that read theſe Papers, to take a ſpecial care, that they do not imitate them. Let us be watchful, that we do not put a greater Cheat upon our ſelves, than they would do: by imagining our ſelves good Chriſtians, meerly becauſe we

we Zealouſly oppoſe the Errors of Popery. That we ought to do; but not leave the great Thing, the amending of our Lives, undone. For may we not deſtroy and pull down by a wicked life, as much as we build up by contending for the Faith? How can others think that we are ſo much concerned, as we ſeem to be for Truth; when we make no uſe of it; but let it lie dead in our minds? What pitty is it, that their hearts ſhould not love that which is good, whoſe minds are inlightned to diſcern that which is true? That their underſtandings being convinced, their wills ſhould not alſo be converted? It is a lamentable thing, to profeſs that we know God, but in our Works deny him. This makes us look as if we were of a Faction, rather than of the Faithful: who oppoſe others rather as our Enemies, than as Chriſt's; as thoſe that differ from us, rather than as thoſe that differ from the Truth.

For if it be the Truth, that we Reverence, why do we not let it Rule and Govern us? Why do we not love to have it nearer to us, than in our Brains? even in our Hearts and Affections. For there is no greater Truth than this, that *Ungodlineſs is the worſt of Hereſies*; a wicked life the moſt oppoſite, of all other things, to the Chriſtian Faith.

Let us never forget therefore that Admonition of the Apoſtle in the *Firſt* Chapter of this Epiſtle to *Timothy*, v. 19. *Hold faith and a good conſcience:* which he repeats again, in the *Third* Chapter to the Deacons, whom he exhorts, to *hold the myſtery of faith in a pure conſcience*, v. 9. For if we put away a *good conſcience*, we may eaſily *make Shipwrack*, even of *our faith*. Which we have juſt cauſe to think, is the reaſon why ſome have fallen from this truly Apoſtolick Church of ours.

Concerning

Concerning which, and concerning whom, I may ſay, as *Epiphanius* (*t*) (putting this place, I have been expounding, and ſome others together) makes the Apoſtle ſpeak to *Timothy*: It is *the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth: which many forſaking, are turned* εἰς μῦθους καὶ ματαιολογίας, *to fables and fooliſh bablings: neither underſtanding what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.*

(*t*) *Hæreſ.* XI. num. 8.

FINIS.

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A Diſcourſe of the *Holy Euchariſt*, in the two great points of the *Real Preſence* and the *Adoration of the Hoſt*. In Anſwer to the two Diſcourſes lately printed

at

Book lately printed for Richard Chiſwell.

at *Oxford* on this Subject. To which is prefixed a large Hiſtorical Preface relating to the ſame Argument. *Quarto.*

The Pillar and Ground of Truth. A Treatiſe ſhewing that the *Roman Church* falſly claims to be *That Church*, and the Pillar of *That Truth*, mentioned by S. *Paul* in his Firſt Epiſtle to *Timothy*, *Chap.* III. *Verſ.* 15. *Quarto.*

A Brief Diſcourſe concerning the Notes of the Church, with ſome reflections on Cardinal *Bellarmin*'s Fifteen Notes. *Quarto.*

An Examination of the Cardinal's Firſt Note, concerning [*The Name of Catholick*].

——His Second Note, [*Antiquity*].

——His Third Note, [*Duration*].

——His Fourth Note, [*Amplitude or Multitude, and variety of Believers*].

——His Fifth Note, [*The Succeſſion of Biſhops*].

——His Sixth Note, [*Agreement in Doctrine with the Primitive Church*].

——His Seventh Note, [*Union of the Members among themſelves, and with the Head*].

(*The reſt will be publiſhed Weekly in their Order*).

A Defence of the Confuter of *Bellarmin*'s Second Note of the Church [*Antiquity*] againſt the Cavills of the Adviſer. *Quarto.*

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A Short Summary of the Principal Controverſies between the *Church of England*, and the *Church of Rome*. Being a Vindication of ſeveral Proteſtant Doctrines, in Anſwer to a late Pamphlet intituled [*Proteſtancy deſtitute of Scripture Proofs*].

FINIS.

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The Pillar and Ground of Truth. A Treatise shewing that the Roman Church falsly claims to be *That Church*, and the Pillar of *That Truth*, mentioned by S. Paul in his First Epistle to *Timothy*, Chap. III. Vers. 15. *Quarto.*

A Brief Discourse concerning the Notes of the Church, with some reflections on Cardinal Bellarmin's Fifteen Notes. *Quarto.*

An Examination of the Cardinal's First Note, concerning [*The Name of Catholick*].

—His Second Note, [*Antiquity*].

—His Third Note, [*Duration*].

—His Fourth Note, [*Amplitude or Multitude, and variety of Believers*].

—His Fifth Note, [*The Succession of Bishops*].

—His Sixth Note, [*Agreement in Doctrine with the Primitive Church*].

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A Short Summary of the Principal Controversies between the *Church of England*, and the *Church of Rome*. Being a Vindication of several Protestant Doctrines, in Answer to a late Pamphlet intituled [*Protestancy destitute of Scripture Proofs*].

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